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INDIAN: SOCIOLOGICAL IDENTIFICATION AND POLITICAL CONSEQUENCE.

University — Université

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Degree for which thesis was presented — Grade pour lequel cette thèse fut présentée

MASTER OF EDUCATION

Year this degree conferred — Année d'obtention de ce grade

1982

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Indian: Sociological Identification and Political Consequence.

by

Denis Wall

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF Master of Education

IN

Intercultural Education

Department of Educational Foundations

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Fall, 1982

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Abstract

This is a study of ethnic identification. Using the theory of Autopoietic Systems as a heuristic device which informs social science about the role of the observer in a scientific investigation, I develop criteria for the identification of the ethnicity of individuals or groups.

I begin the study with a discussion of the divisions within social theory. This presents two paradigmatic frameworks, the Social Facts and the Social Definition paradigms. With that framework as a basis for discussion, General Systems Theory and the theory of Autopoietic Systems are compared and their place as heuristics within social theory elaborated. As a result of this comparison, my conclusion is that the theory of Autopoietic Systems has a useful role to play in social science and, specifically, in ethnic studies since from it may be derived a meta-theory of observation which addresses the role of the social scientist in helping create, and give meaning to, the socio-political divisions in the world.

The focus of the study is a discussion of the criteria (for the initial ascription of ethnicity) used by academic writers who have published articles dealing with "Native" people in Canada. It is found that in many studies such criteria are lacking, resulting in many stereotyped meanings being applied to the term "Native." However, a number of studies do develop these criteria well so that (a) the reader may understand in what context the ethnic label is

being applied and (b) the author's biases and values regarding the label.

Throughout, an address is made to the role of the academic in social science, particularly in the ascription of ethnic labels, and to the political consequences of the knowledge generated from studies based on these labels. It is found that few social science theories are able to deal adequately with the very problematic issue of the role of the observer, although many have tried. It is my contention that the theory of Autopoietic Systems helps provide a theoretical basis for coming to terms with just this issue.

Acknowledgements

A number of interests and concerns were addressed in this study. The first was that I had often felt uncomfortable referring to people as "Indian." The term seemed to carry inappropriate meanings. The main aim of this thesis was to attempt to clarify that issue. The second was a concern for the place of the specialized knowledge of academics in society. I have gained some understanding of that issue too. The third was an interest in Systems Theories. Dr. Carl Urion, my supervisor, insisted that I persue these. It is due to his suggestions that I have completed the work. The process was for me both enlightening and satisfying.

I would like to thank the other members of the committee who have shown enthusiasm for and interest in the project: Dr. Decore for comments on organization and on the sections dealing with social theory, Dr. Buchignani for his papers on ethnicity and constructive comments, and Dr. Harries-Jones for comments on systems theory and on organisation.

I would like to express particular thanks to Sarah and Alanna, my wife and daughter, for their patience and the space and time to finish the work as quickly as I have. Thanks, too, to Mr. Fred Dumont, my employer during the first year of my Masters, who encouraged me to continue my education; and to Mr. Stefan Baldursson for many interesting discussions about sociology.

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1. INTRODUCTION TO A SOCIAL SCIENCE INVESTIGATION

I am almost that which is not. I see myself as an incomprehensible middle point between nothingness and existence; I am one that was and one that will be, I am he who no longer is what he was and is not yet what he will be; and in that betweenness what am I? - a thing, I know not what, which cannot be contained in itself, which has no stability and flows away like water;
(Fénelon [Kolakowski, 1981:38])

This study deals specifically with the identification of "Native", i.e., "Indian", "Eskimo" or "Métis", communities or individuals, and questions how these are initially defined by anthropologists, sociologists - social scientists in general. As such it is part of a body of literature on ethnicity. Glazer and Moynihan (1975:4) suggest that the term "ethnic group" which used to refer to sub-groups or marginal groups within society has begun to have its meaning changed. They state that social scientists "tend increasingly to apply the term 'ethnic group' to any group...even if it is the majority ethnic group within a nation, the Staatsvolk." They go on to claim that social scientists are changing the view they take of ethnic studies. The words "ethnic group" are being replaced by another more appropriate word.

> "The new word is 'ethnicity', and this new usage is the steady expansion of the term 'ethnic group' from minority and marginal sub-group at the edges of society - groups expected to assimilate, to

disappear, to continue as survivals, exotic or troublesome - to major elements of a society." (Ibid:5) (italics added)

This study then is intended to speak directly to ethnic studies and to the identification of ethnicity as it relates to the indigenous people of Canada.

1.1 The Purpose and Justification for the Study

Given the relatively new status of the field ethnic studies, it has become necessary to ask the question: How does one identify the ethnicity of groups or individuals? That is, how does the social scientist identify what it is he/she is trying to understand?[1]

One answer is provided by Buchignani (1980,1982a) who has suggested that it is not primarily through the cultural activities and traits of groups that they may be identified but through the ethnic identity individuals feel at any particular time.

"In this newer perspective, ethnicity is first of all what people think they are: an identity based upon a recognition that they share a certain heritage with others." (Buchignani 1980:83)

Another point of view and perhaps the most common, is that ethnicity or the ethnic group is identified by norms,

---

[1] The first usage of the term "ethnicity" is recorded in the 1972 Supplement of the Oxford English Dictionary as being 1953.

roles and status relations, all of which are seen to be unique to that group. The same notions have pertained to the identification of groups and organizations in general, not just of ethnic groups (e.g.Bertrand 1972).

These represent two distinct ways of identifying groups and their members; of course they may not identify the same individuals as members of one particular group. Thus, at this level, at least, the picture of who and what is under investigation is blurred.

The primary purpose of this study is to develop criteria which will aid the social scientist to initially ascribe an ethnic label to groups or to individuals. These criteria will be developed using a meta-theory of observation which may be derived from the theory of Autopoietic Systems. They are, then, used to critique the methods of identification employed by social scientists in academic studies focusing on "Native" groups or individuals. Thus, this investigation will discuss the methods used in such papers regarding the identification of the ethnicity of the subjects and goes on to suggest criteria by which such identification may be considered valid.

The social sciences have, since their beginnings, included arguments about methodology and the role of the social scientist. That is, there has been constant questioning of the ways in which he/she goes about work and whether he/she can ultimately be an objective and unbiased observer of social phenomena. Such discussions are relevant

to ethnic studies.

1.2 Commonsense, Ethnic Studies and Social Science

1.2.1 Commonsense

One of the major problems for the social scientist is the determination of community or group boundaries. Buchignani (1982a:15) suggests that even though social scientists have been aware of the problems inherent in the categories they have used, they have nonetheless used them widely. He states,

> "Researchers have always known that a heterogeneous population like Italians in Toronto is not a community no matter how one defines it. Even so, the concept of community has had great attraction because it allows one to tidily bound the scope of inquiry and generalize about the people bounded by it.
>
> "Such procedures may make life simple for the social scientist but do so at the cost of misapprehending social reality."

Such definitions could be said to be commonsense, everyday definitions of reality - definitions which most people hold. Walsh (1972:38) criticises 'positivistic sociologists' who conceive of social life in ways that are "effectively no different from those employed by ordinary

members of society". Both rely on "taken for granted assumptions about the reality which the reader is required to fill in before he can make sense of the explanations provided". He concludes that "there are no grounds for treating one (the social scientist's view) as superior to the other (the layman's) as an account of reality".

It could easily be argued that "interpretive" sociologists, phenomenologists or symbolic interactionists (e.g. Braroe 1975), for example, who rely on the categories and descriptions of reality provided by the subjects of their study, are creating equally poor descriptions of reality because these too are, by definition, commonsense notions. By this I mean that social scientists allow the construction of social reality, as discussed in their investigations, to be born by the subjects being investigated. They seem to negate their role in the development and use of categories and labels.

Murphy (1971:224) makes this point quite explicit when he states,

> "The acceptance of any particular set of verbal categories and of concepts imbedded in them tends to preclude the awareness of alternate classifications; a way of seeing is also a way of not seeing."

It is this perception that there are many ways of seeing the world and that it is the social scientist's job to be aware of them that makes Murphy demand of the ethnologist an ability to transcend what he calls "folk

sociology" which itself tends to create commonsense categories.

He says,

> "The level of empirical reality provided by folk sociology serves as a base line but it must be transcended, the ethnologist goes beyond it, so to speak, to derive another structure that is at once contradictory of the informant's model and capable of explaining the raw behavioral data gathered in the field." (Ibid:189)

Alfred Schutz (1962:12), a sociologist, expresses an almost identical concern when he suggests that everyday "typifications" must form the basis of social science "typifications." It is the social scientist's job to come to grips with the meanings underlying commonsense interpretations of the world. He puts it this way,

> "The objects constructed by the social scientist, in order to grasp this social reality, have to be founded upon the thought objects constructed by the commonsense thinking of men, living their daily life within their social world. Thus, the constructs of the social scientists are, so to speak, constructs of the constructs made by the actors on the social scene, whose behavior the social scientist has to observe and to explain in accordance with the procedural rules of this science."

Even though Schutz is considered the father of phenomenological sociology, he makes a point to be understood by all social scientists: commonsense understanding of the social world is an insufficient base for social science. The scientists involved have to be prepared to question the categories they use.

Relating this discussion to ethnic studies, Horowitz (1975:119) speaks of the "indicia" and the "criteria" of ethnic identity. The latter are bases upon "which judgements of collective likeness and unlikeness" are made, while the former are operational definitions of identity "on which ready judgements of individual membership are made". There is, he suggests, considerable confusion between the two. Indicia are subject to contradiction because they are probabilistic but they tend to be considered criteria of identification. "The confusion arises in part because long usage of the indicium may result in its being treated as criteria" (Ibid:119-120). For example, while using the term "Indian," indicia such as legal description or biological heritage are used as the criteria for affixing the label. What is often neglected is how the label was arrived at in the first place. That is, the label is seen as unproblematic.

Thus, an individual may be identified by the social scientist as a member of a group which itself is not well defined. Commonsense notions of ethnicity tend to be based on such indicia which are subject to change and may be

incorrect for the purpose intended.

Horowitz discusses further the use of cultural indicia which "as a determinant of identity has probably been vastly overemphasised" (Ibid:124). But he does not negate the use of these altogether. He suggests that they do have a role to play in identification.

Whatever the intricacies of identification, the point being made here is quite simple: the social scientist is responsible for deriving clearly defined categories, ones that are based on everyday notions but not formulated as the layman would formulate them. He/she must also have explicit criteria for the derivation of such categories.[2]

1.2.2 Social Science and Politics

While social science notions must delve below the levels of folk sociology, there arises the concern that it may not be value-free no matter how thoroughly it may be grounded. Stating that science in general supported the class structures of society, Marx suggested that his method of "dialectical materialism" resulted in a "true" science, i.e., one that was not surrounded by ideologies of one sort or another (see Lefebvre,1969; Lenin, 1969tr.; Marx, 1977tr.). More recently, in the Marxist tradition, Apple

---

[2] For a more thorough reading of this issue (the social scientist basic assuptions) see Gouldner (1970) and Berger and Kellner (1981) Both of whom suggest that for social science to be as objective as possible the scientist must recognise and state his basic assumptions. Among these assumptions are the indicia and criteria of ethnic identification.

(1979) has discussed science as an agent of the "hegemony" of certain classes. Although the knowledge generated by such science is claimed to be value-free, it is used (unbeknownst to most) to support the prevailing divisions in society. Science then is used to legitimize the prevailing power structures. His discussion of this focuses on the role of the educational system and the curriculum developed within it. Both are integrally intertwined with science since scientific notions are passed on through the school system. He states that,

> "The control of the knowledge preserving and producing sectors of a society is a critical factor in enhancing the ideological dominance of one group...or class...over less powerful groups of people or classes." (1979:57)

He goes on to quote Edelman who, while mentioning communication and language, suggests that though the notions of social science may appear to be neutral and the language generated by these notions in schools may seem value-free, they inevitably are

> "...both a sensitive indicator and a powerful creator of background assumptions about people's levels of competence and merit." (Ibid:143)

It is this subtle influence within the classroom and within science which gives (and controls) meaning to categories developed. He concludes it is this that provides particular sectors of the society with control over social and economic

outcomes.[3] These arguments all suggest that science should not base itself in commonsense notions alone and must be selfconsciously aware of its place in the socio-political world. An implicit (if somewhat naive) assumption is that this sort of social science itself would be value-free - free of the ideological shrouds which choke life from science as we tend to understand it.

It is not only the Marxist tradition which questions the role of values in social science. The phenomenological and Weberian traditions (e.g. Berger and Kellner, 1981) suggest that an appropriate scientific objectivity may be obtained if the social scientist is aware that he/she is responsible for an interpretation of the everyday interpretations of social phenomena. However, in this tradition there is less concern with the socio-political consequences of the knowledge generated by the academic. The major concern is achieving objectivity in the social sciences.

Ellul (1980) criticizes the social sciences for imprecision and lack of standardized meanings. However, he goes on to suggest that each school in the social sciences has common meanings which are applied to the words used. He says "there are solid reasons why each doctrine gives a

---

[3] The final solution according to Apple, and others, is the notion of emancipatory education. A system which would develop critical thinking. See also discussions of praxis and education, and critical theory in Groome (1980:152ff) who analyses the work of Habermas and Paulo Friere, and Crocker's (1977) paper which analyses the notion of Praxis of the Yugoslav philosophers and sociologists.

different sense to social order... In other words, the semantic choice is a doctrinal choice" (1980:240). Here he is discussing the notions of value and interest.

The current turmoil in social science has, then, as one of its problems the role played by the social scientist in the social affairs of the world (e.g. Karabel and Halsey, 1975; Gouldner, 1971; Hymes, 1971). In Canada, with regard to ethnic studies and particularly the study of the relations between the "Indian," the government and the social scientist, a number of writers have addressed the issue. They include Sally Weaver (1981), Fisher (1981b) and Urion (1980:6) who, pointing to academics in education, suggests that many, by adhering to certain methods, develop less an understanding of social life than they do perpetuate the status-quo of power relations and separation between the "Indian" and the rest of Canadian society.

The "Indian" has clearly been relegated to the fringes of society. At the time of the signing of the treaties, and before, during the French colonial period (Jaenen, 1973), "Indians" were isolated and seen to be easily moulded so as to eventually join the mainstream of the society. They were strangers both physically and conceptually. The Department of Indian Affairs (in various forms) was charged with the administration of "Indians" under the legislative guidance of the Indian Act. As a result, Dyck (1980:34) states that

> "...upon this constitutional foundation was erected a framework ...that has effectively segregated Indians from the mainstream of Canadian society over the past 100 years."

What specific role the academic plays in these divisions and where his/her ideas show themselves most is uncertain but undoubtedly there is an important role filled by some academics in supporting the social position of "Indians."

The values of social scientists are undoubtedly a basis upon which investigations are undertaken. Objectivity is readily recognized as being problematic; but the political involvement of the social scientist is considered by many to be avoidable. For example, Weber in his essay "Science as Vocation" suggests that while an approximation of objectivity is possible

> "...the true teacher will beware of imposing from the platform any political position upon the student, whether it is expressed or suggested."(Gerth and Mills 1946:146)

He did not deny the role of values and presuppositions in the cultural sciences - he states that any social science approach must be "from this or that weltanschauliche position" (Ibid:151). But it appears that he maintained that the social scientist should and could remain apolitical. Whether this is in fact the case or not (Weber was a highly political man) is not that important. Those who followed him, for example, Schutz (1962) and Berger (1967), discuss

the objectivity of the social scientist and that for him or her to get as close to objectivity as possible the interpretation of everyday interpretations was necessary. This position does not directly discuss the role of the social scientist in supporting the divisions of the social world.

The question raised here is: "Can social science be apolitical?" I will suggest later in this thesis that it cannot.

1.2.3 Paradigms in Social Science

What has been hinted at to this point is that the social sciences, particularly sociology, are divided in their approaches to the study of social life.

Thomas Kuhn (1970) suggested that the social sciences were pre-paradigmatic and could not therefore partake in the processes of normal science. Some social scientists have subsequently tried to show him wrong. For example, Ritzer (1975) argues there is not one but three paradigms into which sociology might be divided. These paradigms are the "Social Facts" paradigm which includes such schools of sociological thought as structural-functionalism and conflict theory; the "Social Definition" paradigm including phenomenological sociology, ethnomethodology, action theory and symbolic interactionism; and the "Social Behavior" paradigm including exchange theory and behavioral sociology.

Another example is Friedricks (1970) who views sociology as having two paradigms: the "priestly" and the "prophetic." A third, is Wilson's (1970) division of sociology into the "interpretive" and the "normative" paradigms which correspond to Ritzer's first two.

Abel (1970) refuses to divide the discipline into paradigms arguing that such an intellectual feat is not profitable and gives an incorrect impression of the discipline as divided when in fact there are a number of interrelationships between major figures and schools of thought.

What becomes obvious (today as much as was the case when Olsen [1968] made the following statement) is that

> "for many students, both beginning and advanced the field of sociology is a chaotic jumble of unrelated and contradictory ideas, and concepts and propositions." (Olsen 1968:V)

There are a very large number of possible divisions within the discipline and sociologists themselves are unable to agree on which are the most appropriate. For the purposes of this thesis the discipline will be divided in two using terms provided by Ritzer (1975): the Social Facts and Social Definition paradigms.

While speaking of Wilson's normative paradigm, Dreitzel (1970:XI) makes the following statement which applies to the Social Facts paradigm.

"...an actor is seen, on the one hand, as having certain attitudes dispositions, and needs and, on the other hand, as being controlled by social norms and rules that crystallize in role expectations."

Durkheim may be viewed as the father of this paradigm. Although he defined the "stuff" of sociology as "social facts" for methodological purposes hoping that such a notion would create for sociology a scientific orientation, much akin to the natural sciences, those who followed tended to reify "social facts" and, thus, to use them as a basis for a normative interpretation of social life.

Durkheim (1938:3-5) wrote the following in 1895 about two types of social facts:

"(The first) consists of ways of acting, thinking and feeling, external to the individual, and endowed with a power of coercion, by reason of which they control him...They constitute...a new variety of phenomena; and it is to them exclusively the term 'social' ought to be applied... Since their source is not in the individual, the substratum can be no other than society, either the political society as a whole or some one of the partial groups it includes, such as religious denominations, political, literary and occupational associations etc...These ways of thinking and acting...constitute the domain of sociology....It is generally accepted to-day, however, that most of our ideas and our

tendencies are not developed by ourselves but come to us from without. How can they become part of us except by imposing themselves upon us?

"But there are other facts without such crystallized form which have the same objectivity and the same ascendency over the individual. These are called 'social currents'...They come to each one of us from without and can carry us away in spite of ourselves. Of course, it may happen that, in abandoning myself to them unreservedly, I do not feel the pressure they exert upon me. But it is revealed as soon as I try to resist them."

The other side of the issue is the Social Definition paradigm. An argument for this paradigm is expressed by Dreitzel (1970:5) who suggests that such terms as norm, role and status as used in social factist writings are useful as an "intellectual shorthand for describing complex arrangements and activities...but are of limited utility for specifying how the actor or observer negotiates everyday behavior". He goes on to say that it is not clear that such terms "are relevant categories for the actor's nor relevant for the observer's understanding of the action scene he seeks to describe" (Ibid:7).

The Social Definition paradigm, then, has as a focus the role of the individual in the construction of the social world.

Criticising the Durkheimian prespective, Walsh (1972) suggests that the way in which individual actors negotiate the "emergent social world," in terms of shared signs, language and gestures, is ignored. Subsuming Durkheim under "positivistic sociology" he says that,

> "Actors meanings are not ignored,...rather they are turned into variables...such as cultural prescriptions, role expectations, norms, values, interests and so on, which can, themselves, be identified in terms of objective indices. Such variables are given independent status vis-a-vis the actor, in the sense that he is conceived of as the passive vehicle for their operations. This is achieved by treating these variables as either internalized by the actor or as enforced by external mechanisms of social control, in a way that emphasised their determinant character with regard to social action." (1972:42)

The Social Facts paradigm, then, is perceived as presenting social reality as a concrete entity which is imposed upon the individual. The intersubjective negotiation of meaning tends to be disregarded.

The social definitionists, on the other hand, are criticised for ignoring the role that "social facts," in the form of social structures, play in the formation of social life. Typical is this statement by Dreitzel (1970:XVII) which suggests that an accord between the two views is

possible and necessary.

> "The social world is not only structured by language but by the modes and forces of material production and by systems of domination. Furthermore these three factors cannot be analysed independently from each other, but, for the explanation of any social behavior, must be seen as mutually dependent variables."

The Social Definition paradigm gained prominence as an alternative to social factist views. Social factists were seen to be naive about the role of the social scientist in investigations. His or her objectivity was assumed to be unproblematic since he or she was following the method of the natural sciences. However, as was noted earlier, the Weberian tradition focused on the values of the social scientist. The aim was to come to terms with a means by which the observer could become objective, at least as much as was humanly possible.

Both paradigms tended to lead discussion away from the recognition of the observer's role in the political divisions of the social world. That is, the social definitionist concentrated discussions on the observer's objective interpretations of the "typifications" of the individuals under investigation; the social factists did not broach any discussion of objectivity or political invlovement.

1.2.4 Ethnic Studies and Community Boundary

Following this split in the social sciences, there are basically two ways of understanding ethnicity. This has been mentioned briefly already. The social factist might present a normative point of view. Such an example is provided by Glazer and Moynihan (1975:4) who describe ethnicity as "a distinct cultural tradition and origin". This assumes that ethnicity is defined by observable behaviors rather than by the perceptions of the individuals themselves about which group they represent.

As a reaction to this view, Dreitzel (1970:IX) indicates that sociologists are beginning to take the interpretive view by analysing "the question of how people communicate with each other,...how they make sense of their doings." And Buchignani (1981:27) suggests that this question has resulted in far greater ease when looking at ethnicity "from the inside...something rather rare until recently."

Manyoni (1978) discusses the need for the synthesis of these two points of view so that the investigator may have a rounded perspective of an ethnic community.[4]

Even with a mingling of perspectives, if it is possible to join them, there is still a great problem identifying community boundaries.

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[4] Talcott Parsons (1975:56) hints at the need to join the perceptions of the subjects and the observer. Of ethnic groups he states: "This is a group the members of which have, both with respect to their sentiments and those of non-members, a distinct identity."

> "...there remain many unexplored or ill-developed aspects of community-based studies. This is especially so of the concept of community which needs to be much further refined. Sociologists and anthropologists have tended to use the term with considerable imprecision, often as a shorthand reference for the people under investigation." (Buchignani 1981:15)

Manyoni concurs when he suggests that analytical clarity is lacking in the terms ethnicity and ethnic group (1975:27).

If one were able to affix ethnicity using either or both conceptual frameworks, there are other matters which perhaps must be dealt with. For example, the multiple identities an individual may have could affect the observer's definition of his membership.

> "Ethnic identity is not always at the forefront of peoples' minds. Its use is contextually specific, and ethnicity is only one of many identities." (Buchignani 1980:84)

Horowitz (1975), in the same vein, discusses the individual's many "layers of identity", while Kovacs (1978:8) states that "in most cases two or more ethnicities may be accommodated in the culture of the individual."

Horowitz referring to context states that "all levels (of identity) do not remain equally significant, if only because all contexts do not remain so" (1975:118). External stimuli are seen by him as the precipitators of the

dominance of any one identity.

A final point to be made is one referred to by Manyoni. He suggests that an individual may have an ethnic identity but will not necessarily be an active and self-conscious member of an ethnic group. That is, his/her ethnicity may come to the fore given certain contexts and interactions.

The picture of ethnicity and ethnic groups which arises is one showing a differing understanding of what these terms mean. The boundaries may be continuously mobile, the components constantly changing. Groups may become larger or smaller, may split into independent units or may be formed by the joining of formerly independent units; all dependent somehow on context (Horowitz 1975:115).

Perhaps one of the reasons for this confusion is that, as Manyoni suggests, social scientists have not come to terms with the "factuality" of their concepts and categories. Are these categories in fact tangible objects? He says, "we need to broaden our conceptual framework, to distinguish ethnicity as a cognitive concept, and ethnicity as a reified set of structural relations" (1978:28).

Given what has been said above, it is little wonder that social scientists tend to question their ability to affix ethnicity. Manyoni suggests further that what ethnic studies needs is a reexamination and refining of the "heuristic devices by which the units of study are conceptualized" (Ibid).

1.3 Conclusion

What is evident then? There is great disagreement about the use of ethnic labels and about the observer's ability to provide appropriate meaning for them. When these markers are used there are two approaches in coming to an understanding of what makes individuals, so defined, unique. Social factists tend toward the study of cultural attributes, etc., observing from the outside if you like. Social definitionists tend to observe from the inside, getting the individuals to more or less tell their own story. The categories or labels used are often taken for granted. That is, the criteria for their use are not discussed. As a result it appears that there is little reference made to the observer's role in creating the categories he/she uses. This perhaps is not due to lack of inclination but, as was mentioned above, from a paucity of "heuristic devices by which the units of study are conceptualized."

This thesis is an attempt to provide the social scientist interested in ethnic studies with such a device. I suggest that a recent theory, the theory of Autopoietic Systems, may be useful in providing a method by which social scientists may conceive of ethnic categories. This method is to be derived from a meta-theory of observation which may be garnered from the theory. It will be shown that this meta-theory takes into account the role of the observer as a political being. It not only addresses his/her presuppositions about social life but also his/her role in

supporting the conceptual divisions which may appear in the socio-political world.

Once the heuristic device is established, I will go on to provide a concrete example of its use in the ascribing of the label "Indian" in social science investigations.

Chapter Two discusses in more depth the Social Facts and the Social Definition paradigms showing the implications of each for the social sciences, the relative merits and weaknesses of each, and the use of each in ethnic studies. The social definitionist views will be presented as an advancement for social science when compared to social factist views. That is, in ethnic studies, at least, the understanding of the elements of ethnicity, when approached by the social definitionist, becomes clearer.

Chapter Three goes on to present a discussion of General Systems Theory. This theory has been touted as a means by which the two paradigms may be reconciled. However, I will show it to be simply a more advanced form of social factism. I present this discussion, first, to show that there have been other attempts, in addition to social definition, to resolve some of the problems inherent in the social factist notions and, secondly, to provide a grounding in the use of formal systems theories as heuristics in the social sciences, including ethnic studies. This grounding provides a background for a discussion of the theory of Autopoietic Systems which follows in Chapter Four. That theory is contrasted with General Systems Theory both in its

formal characteristics and in its use as a heuristic for social science. I will show that while General Systems Theory has been used as an analogy, a metaphor, to aid in a description of social systems, the theory of Autopoietic Systems is not intended to be used that way. What the theory of Autopoietic Systems does is provide the social scientist with a meta-theory of observation, i.e., a means for the conceptualization of categories. The specific criteria for such a process are outlined in the chapter.

Chapter Five applies the notions derived from the theory of Autopoietic Systems to the specific use of the label "Native."[5] What will be seen is that academics tend not to have an appropriate method of ascribing meaning to the label "Native." Using the criteria developed in Chapter Four, I will indicate how the label "Native" might be applied and given meaning by an observer before the work of investigation takes place.

Chapter Six will conclude the thesis by presenting a discussion of the political consequences, in the case of the "Native," resulting from the lack of appropriate heuristics.

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[5] I will use the term "Native" when referring to any of the following descriptors or labels as they are used by social scientists: "Indian," "Eskimo" or "Métis."

2. A SOCIOLOGICAL CONTEXT FOR ETHNIC STUDIES

This chapter will examine how the two paradigms, Social Facts and Social Definition, approach ethnic studies. The relative merits and weaknesses of each will be discussed.

The division of social science into two paradigms is a necessarily limited view but one which suffices for the present purposes. Such an enterprise may give a false impression that there is only division and conflict within the social sciences and may tend to blurr the continuity and interrelatedness of the paradigms. But it must be remembered that they are related and tend to influence each other.

Martindale (1981:606) deals with the conflicts within sociology and suggests, as does Rocher (1972), at least a two way split in sociological theory; and by doing so lends credence to the split I have suggested here. He states,

> "There are few decisions more basic made by students of human social life than the comparative importance they assign to the individual and to the collectivity."

Emphasis on collectivity is a mark of the social factist while the individual is emphasized by the social definitionist. Each view provides a markedly different method for the practice of social science and a different understanding of its role within the social world.

2.1 The Social Facts Paradigm

Abel (1970) suggests that given a mix of influences from the Scottish moral philosophers such as Hume, Fergusson, Shaftesbury and from the French philosophers of the Enlightenment, for example, Montesquieu, Turgot, Condorcet and St. Simon, one may distill two basic topics of discussion among those who studied social phenomena in the nineteenth century.

One was the view that societies may be seen as wholes and that it was necessary to discover the common features of the organisation and relationships of institutions within disparate societies; included in this search were investigations of common patterns of evolution and of laws which might be considered fundamental to all societies.[‘]

The Newtonian conception of nature also influenced the notions of late nineteenth century sociology. That is, nature was conceived of as holding hidden a rational order to which all phenomena, including social, were subject and which must be understood.[’]

Abel suggests that Auguste Comte (1789-1857), and others such as Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), Lester Ward

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‘ The second view which will not be discussed further in this chapter was that the effects of the social environment on the individual should be studied with emphasis placed on the development of a better society.

’ Sociology from this point of view has as its main aim "the co-ordination of all relevant knowledge about societies in order to discover principles applicable to society at large and to provide the most comprehensive interpretation of the origin, the continuity and the destiny of human society." (Abel 1970:4)

(1841-1913) and Albion Small (1854-1926) can be considered among the founders of this sort of sociology.[8] It was Spencer who helped introduced to sociology the organismic conception of the group. This is a form of social realism, i.e. groups are real, concrete entities which have an existence over and above the individuals who make them up, which views the group and the biological organism as having identical structures and functions.

> "Among the common principles of organisation Spencer stresses the co-operation of the components of both group and organism for the benefit of the whole, ...Also, in both group and an organism, structures and functions adapt and readapt for changing conditions and activities." (Abel,1970:33-34) (italics added)[9]

It is within this milieu that Durkheim's contribution to sociology may be discussed. It might seem from what

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[8] Abel does, however, discuss the firm basis of the discipline as being laid between 1895 and 1920 by Emile Durkheim (1855-1917), Max Weber (1864-1920), Georg Simmel (1858-1918) and Charles Horoton Cooley (1864-1929).

[9] Martindale presents a concise discussion of bio-organismic theories of society which rose to prominence in the latter part of the nineteenth century after Darwin's contributions to biology. These were popular among Spencer's successors much as Paul von Lilienfeld (1829-1903), Albert Schaffle (1831-1907) and Alfred Fouillée (1838-1912), all of whom further refined the comparisons between the living organism and society. It is of note that von Lilienfeld coined the term "social pathology." For him society was living and comprised such things as a nervous system and intercellular substances which bound it together (1981:93).

On page 94, Martindale quotes Albion Small who, writing in 1905, states that "not merely in sociology, but in every department of knowledge, the organic concept is the most distinctive modern note..."

follows that Durkheim disregarded the role of the individual in his discussions but it should be remembered that such is not the case. As Abel suggests, for him

> "...the social milieu is constituted primarily of collective representations, institutions with their norms and values, and organisational patterns of co-operative activities. Representations, norms and values exist only in individual minds; institutions and patterns of activities are manifest only in individual behavior. These social facts, although wholly dependent on people in general, are independent of any particular person." (1970:42)

Many of those who followed Durkheim treated such facts as objectively real, having a concrete existence beyond the control of the individual or of the collectivity. The result of this tendency is that the methods tend to be positivistic, akin to those of the natural sciences. Social facts are to be isolated, studied and measured. The conclusions drawn from such methods are viewed as unbiased knowledge of the social world (Berger and Kellner 1981:11).

Out of this Durkheimian-Spencerian tradition arose structural-functionalism. For the structural-functionalist, society is composed of interrelated parts (structures, institutions) linked together in a state of equilibrium. Change is seen as orderly; change in any part of the whole affects other parts. Structures in equilibrium are viewed as normal while conflict is treated as in some way abnormal -

pathological. Thus for writers such as Parsons and Bales (1955) the norms of the collectivity are imposed upon and common to the individuals; these norms are social controls.

Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown (1881-1955) and Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942), laid the groundwork for the structural-functionalist perspectives in anthropology. The former dealt with the comparison of structures and institutions between different cultures while the latter dealt with a detailed analysis of single cultures from the point of view of the informants; Malinowski also discussed the psychological needs of the individuals as they related to the structures.

For Radcliffe-Brown, it was the structures which had the greatest influence within the social system. He, thus, denied any resemblance between his form of structural-functionalism and the psycho-biological functionalism of Malinowski.

In sociology Parsons, at different times, took both points of view.[10] No matter what their differences, all three scholars tended to study societies as concrete entities, fixed at one time period and apparently static.

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[10] Talcott Parsons dealt with social action in his early work. He was concerned with the role of the individual and his place in social phenomena. Ritzer (1975) suggests that even though the actor is presented as behaving voluntaristically he "is never seen by Parsons as being totally free, as having free will. Ends, conditions and norms, as well as other situational exigencies, all serve to restrict the freedom of the actor... (the bulk of Parsons' later work was) at the level of social facts and an examination of them as if they were separable from the minds of men" (p94-95).

While the evolution of societies was not denied, it was little discussed.''

An important note is the move away from viewing societies as organisms, while keeping the analogy to help inform the understanding of social systems.

Structural-functionalism and functionalism have been widely criticised. Gouldner, while discussing Parsons, states,

> "it is not the cleavages in the social world that are real to Parsons... but its unbroken oneness: the fact that it all grows out of one elemental stuff, social action, into increasingly differentiated structures." (1970:210)

Such structures are seen to go on to impose norms upon action which itself stabilises as a result. (Murphy, 1971:33-34)

Murphy (Ibid:59) also criticises the imperative for homogeneity and stability. He suggests that for such writers as Durkheim and Parsons the adherence to the tabula rasa concept of mind is inappropriate for the understanding of social life. To disregard the role of the individual in the development of norms, values, roles and style and to assume

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'' Edmund Leach has criticised anthropological functionalism for its tendency to develop "a typology of fixed systems... We must recognise that few if any of the societies which a modern field worker can study show any marked tendency toward stability" (Harris 1968:541).

they are totally imposed is somewhat naive.'[12]

It becomes apparent that the Social Facts paradigm develops a mechanistic view of social life. The individual is seen to lack power, influence and a measure of control over his or her own life. Social structures and institutions are viewed as real, concrete entities which impose a particular set of actions on the individual.

2.1.1 Social Facts and Ethnic Studies

With regard to ethnic studies and social factists, in anthropology during the 1960s Buchignani (1982b:2) states that functionalism was a formidable force and

> "...oriented the discipline towards questions of homogeneity, holism, consensus and system maintenance in the context of coherent social units."

The result was that "heterogeneity, social discontinuity, dissention and competition" were virtually ignored. This is found in many studies of "Natives." For example, Romaniuk's (1974) study of the effects of modernization on the fertility of James Bay "Indian" women makes no reference of

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[12] Murphy discusses the structural-functional concepts as not dealing in absolutely fixed and unchanging societies. What this school of thought does suggest is that though societies are subject to disturbances, the strong tendency is for them to reestablish orderly, integrated activity and "social solidarity." Here the notion of the power of norms comes to the fore. They form an integrated network and are thus much more stable than the individual's concepts; the individual is moulded as a result. Social control of the individual is the train of thought which then becomes dominant.

the processual nature of change within the identified society. Generations are presented as separate entities. Each is viewed as static in time and space. The "Indian" is shown as in a particular stage of acculturation, being moulded by the dominant society.

Perhaps the most important concern raised in this article is that the category "Indian" seems to need no explanation. It is viewed as a real category and the individuals who are seen to be "Indian" are assumed to exhibit "Indianness" in all their behaviors. Also of concern is the fact that the observer apparently stands back from the society so as to discover the "facts" about it. He does not make much use of the attitudes and interpretations of his subjects. Other examples which do exactly the same thing are Coldevin's (1976) study of the effects of southern television on "Eskimo" "information levels and socio-economic aspirations"; and Schubert and Cropley's (1972) study comparing "verbal regulation of behavior and I.Q. in Canadian Indian and White children".

It was an awareness of the weaknesses of the Social Facts position which prompted interest in the notions of the Social Definition paradigm. The social factist emphasis on structural issues which tended to disregard the role of the individual in social phenomena as well as the conservative nature of the notions, i.e., avoidance of discussion of conflict and dissention, provided fuel for social definitionist arguments. The social definitionists also

questioned the social factist taken-for-granted assumptions of objectivity while conducting investigations.

2.2 Social Definition Paradigm

Whereas Ritzer considered Durkheim the exemplar of the Social Facts paradigm, he considers Max Weber (1864-1920) the exemplar of the Social Definiton paradigm. Weber's focus was on the individual's motivation and on intersubjective meanings and action. This emphasis forms the basis of the differences between Weber and Durkheim.

> "One of his (Weber's) primary motivations was to analyze the necessary linkage between subjective motivational patterns and the broad institutional patterns of society. Weber's interest in social institutions (or social structures) and social change was equal to Durkheim's but his starting point was different." (Johnson 1981:202).

The result of various influences on Weber was that for him "reality is ultimately not reducible to a system of laws... no body of law can exhaust a science of culture. Nor can one ever hope to achieve complete predictability" (Martindale, 1981:378-9).[13] Reality, from this interpretive view point, is discussed as process. The social scientist cannot then study a series of static objects, as was the social factist

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[13] Weber, as discussed by Martindale (1981:377), synthesised the Kantian and the neo-Kantian as well as the Idealist and the neo-Idealist traditions in Germany.

wont, and explain the working of the social world.

For Weber, it is the individual who is objectively real and "society is merely a name to refer to a collection of individuals" (Johnson, 1981:209). To such a nominalist the idea that society can be conceived of in organic, factist, terms, as something more than the individuals who make it up, is purely speculative. To quote Weber:

> "Interpretive sociology considers the individual (Einzelindividuum) and his action as the basic unit, as the 'atom' - if the disputable comparison for once may be permitted. In this approach the individual is also the upper limit and the sole carrier of meaningful conduct...In general, for sociology, such concepts as 'state', 'association', 'feudalism', and the like designate certain categories of human interaction. Hence it is the task of sociology to reduce these concepts to 'understandable' action, that is, without exception, to the actions of participating individual men." (Gerth and Mills 1946:55)

Weber's discussions of social action tend to emphasize that the individual "is an active creator of his own social reality... (and that) social reality is not a static set of coercive social facts" (Ritzer 1975:89).

Thus it is possible for Weber to discuss social order and integration as well as conflict and change, all of which are "determined by the intention of carrying the actor's

will against the opposition of others". Such conflict could vary from competition to bloody conflict. But this is unlikely as long as actions are "based on the subjective feeling of the parties that they belong together" (Martindale 1981:386-387).

Two important schools of sociological thought which Ritzer places within this paradigm include symbolic interactionism and phenomenological sociology. I will discuss these briefly so as to give a more rounded view of the paradigm.

2.2.1 Symbolic Interactionism

The advocates of the school of symbolic interactionism are opposed to the interpretation of action in stimulus-response terms.'[4] They tend to discuss the processes of micro-level interactions usually leaving aside comment on the macro, structural, level. Herbert Blumer (1962:189) states that

> "human beings interpret..each other's actions instead of merely reacting...Their response is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions. Thus, human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by

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[4] It is not to be assumed that symbolic interactionists follow directly from the work of Weber; Martindale (1981) deals with the history of the school as separate from Weber, although there are influences apparent.

ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions."

This sort of interaction is said to be the basis upon which social structure lies. Structure is the product of individual interaction. And interaction is based upon symbols. What is meant here is that within a culture individuals share common symbols and meanings and are, thus, able to predict each other's behavior. Ritzer states that "in this sense and only in this sense, society is more than a collection of individuals: it is a collection of individuals with a culture..." (1975:104). Social reality then is a symbolic reality.

The main point to be realised here is that there is an individual psychological reworking of external influences and it is through this interpretive event that the social world is moulded.

This provides us with a view in enough depth for the purposes intended here. The next school of thought I would like to discuss is phenomenological sociology.

2.2.2 Phenomenological Sociology

Phenomenological sociology has developed from the philosophy of Edmund Husserl, and was refined by Alfred Schutz (1899-1959) using Weberian notions.

Whereas the symbolic interactionist focused on the subjective understanding of meaningful action, phenomenologists focus on intersubjective, shared meaning as their subject matter. The emphasis is not so much on how

socialization takes place as it is on understanding the typifications of the social world and the meanings applied to them. The concern is with "uncovering, describing and analysing the essential features of the world of every-day life" (Psathas 1973:7-8).

From this point of view, the world of the actor is organised when he/she enters it. Language, culture and social structures provide him/her, and the others with whom he/she interacts, with typifications which enable him/her to find consistent meaning in actions. These typifications are experienced as subjectively real. That is, the actor believes these meanings to be both his/her own and objectively real.

The point to be remembered is that the individual derives his/her knowledge of the world from the group to which he/she is attached. This knowledge will change given the interactions of the individuals . Thus, the shared meanings and the perceived structures of their world will also change.

The discussion presented here of the Social Definition paradigm gives a picture of social scientists who are involved in understanding how the individual develops an understanding of the social world. Social structures are not taken for granted, but are seen as constructs which are developed by individuals in interaction.

With regard to ethnic studies, this means that it is the individuals involved in a particular group who will

define their culture and epistemology. It is assumed that they best know their own minds. Thus, the social scientist must observe and interact with the subjects so as to glean from them the story of their lives.

2.2.3 Social Definition and Ethnic Studies

This paradigm has resulted in ethnic studies being oriented towards the investigation of interpersonal interaction. An interest developed in symbolic interaction, sociolinguistics and social network analysis (Buchignani 1982b:6).

Some of the articles reviewed in Chapter 4 are of the social definitionist orientation. For example, Denton's (1970) look into the presentation of the self in household settings is typical. He observes "Indians" in their homes and through a process of discussion with them he arrives at his conclusions which are interpretations of what he heard and observed. His investigation of "Indian migrants and impression management" (1975) is similarly done. Likewise Nagler's (1970) investigation of "Indian status and identification grouping" among urban "Indians" and Berger's (1973) study of the attitudes of "Indian" families toward education are social definitionist undertakings. Of interest in the last example is the investigator's use of the families to help him decide which of the conclusions he had drawn were appropriate for presentation in the final published article.

2.2.4 Summary

The social definitionists' orientation stems from the fact that they deal with issues not discussed by social factists. They deal with the role of the social scientist insisting that he/she be as objective as possible by interpreting the interpretations of the actors on the social scene, i.e., view the world in as unbiased a fashion as possible. They also deal with the role of the individual actors in the socially constructed meanings given the social world. That is, the individual is seen to have power over the configuration of the social structures. The main weakness of the paradigm is that the notions of the social construction of reality are not used to enlighten the investigators' use of categories and labels. Although the investigator is attempting to be as objective as possible, the world he/she is observing is assumed to be given. The terms used are not considered problematic. The social scientists' role in creating the categories, labels and divisions of society is little addressed.

2.3 Conclusion

2.3.1 Differences between the Paradigms

The Social Facts paradigm appears to have developed an inclination among social scientists to study the social world with a view to helping develop a better life for all.

The knowledge generated by the social scientist is assumed to be objective, a true representation of the world and at the same time free of socio-political consequences.

On the other hand, social definitionists seem to have a better understanding of the abstract nature of knowledge, i.e., that it is socially generated; they do discuss the need for objectivity in social science and the scientists' need to be aware of the values and interests of the everyday world.

Another major difference between the paradigms mentioned is the perceived degree of stability of the structures in any particular society. The social definitionists see social structures as influential but also as being mental constructs developed by the interactants and therefore as changeable depending upon the negotiated meanings apparent at any one time. The social factists, on the other hand, see the structures as given, highly immutable and certainly little influenced by the individual. The individual, in fact, is dominated by them.

On the one hand, the social factist tends to study societies as fixed in time and space. This allows the scientist to predict what will happen in a society, given certain known disturbances. The social definitionist, on the other hand, feels that such predictability is not possible because social life is processual, influenced by context and the individuals involved. In other words, social definitionists tend not to look for the laws underlying

social behavior but do seek to understand how it is human beings interact.

The Social Facts paradigm introduces the social researcher to a world which is reified. Although Durkheim said social facts were "things and ought to be treated as things" (1938:27), such a notion was considered a methodological tool only. Those who followed ascribed a reality and a power over the individual to these "facts" which social definitionists find problematic.

The Social Definition paradigm leads the social researcher to focus on the negotiated nature of social life. The social world is one in which the actions, meanings and symbols the participants use are interpreted and negotiated by those who interact. The structures are not necessarily fixed nor are they immutably real. Added to this is the notion that the knowledge human beings have of their world is socially constructed.

Two major works which discuss the social construction of knowledge are The Social Construction of Reality by Berger and Luckmann (1967) and Reality Construction in Society by Holzner (1968). Both books discuss the social nature of the development of knowledge and understanding but do not negate the importance of the influences of existing shared meanings and socially accepted structures.'[8]

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[8] Kuhn (1970) discusses the social agreements reached among natural scientists as to the appropriate methods, problems to be addressed and conclusions to be drawn within particular areas of study. Thus, science is a social activity which generates a particular knowledge acceptable

In ethnic studies these two influences may be seen quite readily. The social factists study groups as concrete entities which impose norms on the individuals without reciprocal influence from them. They use indicia based on such sources as legal documents, for instance, the Indian Act, or the country of origin or perhaps on the individual's biological background to affix ethnicity. Thus, it appears an easy task to identify ethnic groups such as "Natives", "Italians", or what have you. All those identified using these means are assumed to belong to the group and to act in particular ways. Those who tend toward the Social Definition paradigm would suggest that individuals are not necessarily members of the ethnic groups so defined. Since individuals are assumed to negotiate their own meanings, it is thought that they should be allowed to identify themselves as members of groups. The indicia for group membership are provided by the individuals themselves. The social scientist is charged with creating meaning from the actions and interpretations of these individuals.

In ethnic studies this means that the social scientist allows the actors on the scene to create initial meaning for the category used. But it is with a preconceived category or label that the social scientist approaches the investigation. That is, "Indians" are assumed to be "Indians" and it is in interaction that the meaning of what

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'(cont'd)to the participants.

it is to be "Indian" comes to the fore. The use of the label "Indian" is assumed to be unproblematic.

What this means is that neither paradigm helps the social scientist develop criteria for the initial use of a particular label. Thus, he/she is unaware of his/her role in creating conceptual divisions and of the social consequences of the use of these particular labels.

2.3.2 Summary

Are there irreconcilable differences between these paradigms? Just how the two may be joined has been an ongoing topic of discussion for social scientists for some time. For example, General Systems Theory has been purported to provide one means by which the two might be united. In social science the theory is used to provide a metaphor for social systems.

Freidricks (1971:294) discusses the need for the social sciences, qua science, to deal with social phenomena in systems terms. This to "bring cognitive order out of apparent chaos" (1971:293). He says

> "Parsons is right in recognizing that the term (system) must be regarded as a - perhaps the - primary sociological referent if sociology is to be viewed as a science." (ibid:294)

Such a notion as "system," a social facts notion, when used in social science, is used as a heuristic device. Harris (1968) suggests that similar terms, "culture" and

"structure," as used by Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, are heuristics which aid in the conceptualisation of what is being investigated. Radcliffe-Brown states that "analogies, properly used, are important aids to scientific thinking" (Harris 1968:528). It might be said that the social scientist uses the heuristic as a model which forms the framework for the understanding of the content of the "object" being investigated. Albion Small, footnoted earlier, at the beginning of this century stated that the biological analogy was useful for many different disciplines. Paralleling his statement is one by Olsen (1968:227) who states that

> "Virtually all of the sciences - physical, biological, psychological and social - find it useful to construct models as heuristic analytical tools. A model is neither a true description of reality nor a substantive theory nor an analytical procedure. Rather it is a conceptual device designed to facilitate the entire scientific process."[14]

The need for heuristic devices in the social sciences is apparent particularly in ethnic studies where a means of understanding and providing meaning for the categories used continues to evade observers of ethnic groups. General Systems Theory is presented by its adherents as just such a

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[14] Talcott Parsons discusses the biological analogy he and Bales (1955) use in their study of the family. In the same book, it is of note, that Zelditch (1955) has an article which bears a striking resemblance to General Systems Theory, although it is not so well developed.

device. The strengths and weaknesses of the approach will be discussed in the next chapter where it will be seen that although the notions of the theory do loosen social factist concepts it does not, in ethnic studies at least, prove to be a useful tool in the identification of ethnicity. The discussion also provides a backdrop for an understanding of the place of the theory of Autopoietic Systems in the social sciences, a discussion of which will follow in Chapter Four.

3. GENERAL SYSTEMS THEORY

General Systems Theory has developed from theoretical biology. It has incorporated concepts from thermodynamics so as to present notions which may be used as a theoretical framework within which to understand systems in general. It is seen by its proponents as an interdisciplinary model which is intended to help break down the barriers between the physical, biological and social sciences (von Bertalanffy, 1968:12). It is

> "...intended to elaborate principles and laws that are characteristic of 'systems' in general, irrespective of their particular kind, the nature of their component elements, and the relations or forces between them." (von Bertalanffy, 1981:109)

When used in social science it is a theory which is believed to encorporate effectively functionalist, and symbolic interactionist notions. That is, it is suggested that it combines macro and micro issues and that it provides a means for the understanding of both.

General Systems Theory is an attempt by its proponents to loosen the rigidity of the social factists. It is presented as a processual model avoiding the factist view of soical systems as fixed, static and without history. It is also an attempt to be holistic in a more expanded sense than, say, the functionalist might have used the term. While the latter dealt with the integration of the elements of separate groups, the systems theorist deals with the

integration and interaction of these separate groups and with the interrelations of the elements within each.

General Systems Theory deals with social phenomena in mechanistic terms. What is suggested is that the input and output of information creates the organization behind the boundaries of real systems that the observer is interested in understanding. This view that systems are real entities and that they simply need to be discovered and understood is the social factist orientation.

In the sociological context General Systems Theory has been presented by its proponents (e.g. Buckley 1967, 1968; Berrien 1968; Bertrand 1972; Johnson 1981) as being a framework within which some of the concepts of the discipline might be understood. In particular Buckley (1967) and Johnson (1981) discuss it as a framework in which the notions of structural-functionalism, conflict theory and symbolic interactionism can be integrated.

Buckley (1967) presents an introduction to the place of General Systems Theory in the history of social theory. He discusses three models of social theory: the mechanistic, the organic and the processual. He describes these so as to provide a backdrop for General Systems Theory as a social science theory. He states that the mechanistic and organic analogies are more appropriately applied by functionalist and synchronic views of social science. But General Systems Theory is a processual view influenced by members of the Chicago School such as Small and Mead.

In this latter view,

> "...societies and groups continually shift their structures as adaptations to internal or external conditions. Process, then, focuses on the actions and interactions of the components of an ongoing system, such that varying degrees of structures arise, persist, dissolve, and change..." (Ibid:18)

This model, unlike the functionalist view, deals with systems as they change over time; it points out that structures are maleable - a diachronic point of view. But like the social factists, structures are still considered concrete entities.

General Systems Theory, as a processual model of social phenomena, tends to disregard the specific components of systems - the structures of systems in this case; it has "a central focus on the principles of organization per se, regardless of what it is that is organized" (Ibid:36). This theory views systems as organic wholes. The system and the components interrelate developing an emergent evolution. But it must be remembered that it is for the larger system that the components are organized. The component individuals are subordinated to the development of the species. Von Bertalanffy also hoped that the conceptual barriers separating living and non-living systems would be eroded with the use of such notions.

Von Bertalanffy quotes Ackoff regarding the direction in which the theory might take the sciences.

> "The tendency to study systems as an entity rather than as a conglomeration of parts is consistent with the tendency in contemporary science no longer to isolate phenomena in narrowly confined contexts, but rather to open interactions for examination and to examine larger and larger slices of nature." (1968:11)

The model is a bare bones notion which develops principles and laws relevant to all systems whatever kind they may be.

3.0.1 A Closer Look at General Systems Theory

A system has holistic properties which are not found in its parts individually. For example, the cells of a body are quite differently organised and structured when compared to the organization and structure of the whole. Yet the cells are intergral parts of the body. With this in mind the explanation proceeds in terms of systems which are open to external stimuli and information.

Why are systems considered open and what are the resultant characteristics?

The notion of open systems is based on a physical sciences concept: the Second Law of Thermodynamics. This law states that for systems to become organized they must be

open to organizing information.''

In discussing living systems in which equilibrium is a dynamic process not a steady state, von Bertalanffy states that they are similarly open systems. They are "system(s) maintained in import and export, build up and breakdown of material components" (von Bertalanffy 1981:112). For such biological systems it is the propensity for autonomous activity which "is the most primitive form of behavior" (Ibid:115). The implication is that internal stimuli, although necessarily present in all biological systems, tend to be subordinated to external stimuli.''

Generalizing to inform discussions of social life, von Bertalanffy states

> "Symbolic processes 'make for the world openness' of man; that is, man's universe widely transcends biological bondage and even the limitiations of the

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'' To illustrate this concept the example of a sealed ball full of gas is used. Given no change in the external conditions the elements within such a system will move toward equilibrium. This implies that after some finite length of time the molecules will attain a maximum state of randomness, maximum disorganization if you like. There will be no organization into layers, groups, concentrations, or what have you. This state is obtained because no information is moving into the system to stop or slow the increase in entropy. If the system is to remain organized or if it is to become more organized, it must be open to stimulation. Such an input of information creates negative entropy. Entropy is perceived as the system's natural state.

'' A notion like "equifinality" typifies this idea. The suggestion is that the final form of an organism, say an adult human, is not determined by initial conditions but will be arrived at by any number of different routes which are determined by external forces. These influences will include the systems' own output. Regulation through feedback is included in the notion.

senses." (Ibid:119)

On the human social level, then, biological limitations may be overcome. That is, psycho-biological considerations are minor when discussing the influences on human activity.

One further point to be made is that a system such as a living organism is to be considered a "hierarchy of open systems" (Ibid:132). That is, a system contains component systems which are subordinated to the processes of the larger system. (Perhaps another way of saying the same thing is this: The species, its maintenance and evolutionary development, subordinates the individuals' development.)

Let it not be felt that there is some naive stimulus-response notion which fuels the theory. What the theory of open systems says is this:

> "...there is a system into which matter is introduced from outside. Within the system the material undergoes reactions which partly may yield components of higher complexity. That is what we call anabolism. On the other hand, the material is catabolized and the end products of catabolization eventually leave the system." (von Bertalanffy 1968:17-18)

To conclude, General Systems Theory is presented as a theoretical framework which may be used to enlighten the conceptual development of the content of disciplines such as cybernetics or S-R behavior theories. It is seen as an aid to scientists in developing views which would not

necessarily be included in more conventional notions.

3.0.2 Criticism of General Systems Theory

The theory has received sharp and damning criticism particularly from Robert Lilienfeld (1978). He begins by stating that it is an analogy which "pressures a determinacy in science, which many scientists reject" (1978:247).

Another problem is that it assumes systems have clear boundaries. He says of this assumption that it

> "...can arbitrarily isolate the 'system' from the total reality that is infinitely complex, this very assumption of isolability is very much in doubt." (Ibid:248)

It is also arbitrarily assumed that systems are open and that known and specific elements are interconnected in particular ways.

Equally problematic is the suggestion that the ends and purposes of the system are assumed to enforce the co-operation of individuals. Thus, notions of conflict, power disparity, coercion are essentially ignored. As was the social factists position, these are seen as pathological, unnatural. Lilienfeld states,

> "The basic thought forms of systems theory remain classical positivism and behaviorism." (1978:249)

He goes on to say that the assumed connection between subjectivity and objectivity, i.e., the joining of functionalism and symbolic interactionism is simlply not

achieved (Ibid:250).

Lilienfeld's main concern is not that the theory is virtually useless as a guide for empirical study and does nothing but give a new vocabulary to old ideas, but that it is basically an "ideology."

> "Systems theory as social doctrine may be regarded as a new variant of organic or 'organismic' approaches to society." (Ibid:263)

It is a social doctrine which calls for increasing unification of social phenomena. All elements are to be drawn into the system and the goals of the system are those of the elements. Among the consequences Lilienfeld finds increased bureaucratization, an administered society in which the charge for the well-being of the society is given over to the bureaucracy. In other words, Lilienfeld sees systems theorists as conservative and naive when it comes to understanding the political consequences of the theory.

This is particularly vehement criticism of General Systems Theory. But it is not uncalled for. Although the theory has been useful in illuminating some of the deficiencies of the older social factist notions, particularly by providing for concepts such as evolution and interaction in the understanding of social life, it does not work. Lilienfeld makes this point strongly. Its apparent use by Barth (1969) is a case in point.

3.1 Ethnic Studies and Systems Theories

It is possible to relate General Systems Theory to ethnic studies, though self-proclaimed systems theorists do not discuss ethnic identification specifically. Barth (1969), for example, is not a self-proclaimed systems theorist but seems to have drawn on the notions.

Berrien (1968) in a general discussion of social systems indicates that he considers the boundaries of systems to be identified by the interactions of social systems. Using the notions of General Systems Theory, he goes on to discuss the boundary as a filtering surface which codes and decodes inputs - inputs which organize the internal components. The real work of identification, then, is to be found in an understanding of internal organization. One assumption which becomes evident is that the boundary is seen to be stable. Social systems are seen to be given entities. They are immutable, at least, as far as the boundary is concerned. Scott (1981) carries this notion further; he states

> "Many indicators can help to identify the boundaries of collectivities. Some focus attention on the behavioral structure and some on the normative." (p180)

Both writers see the identification of boundary as unproblematic. They suggest that to understand a particular social system an observer must concentrate on the internal processes such as norms, roles and organization.

Scott does discuss the individual as having mobility: one would expect the individual to change his/her activities as he/she moved "across the boundaries between collectivities" (Ibid). Another systems theorist, Bertrand (1972:154) says much the same thing. He suggests that role relationships are important for identification of the group. How the participants "respond to behavioral situations" (Ibid:117), given certain norms of behavior, is the focus. For him, it is when "role ties" are broken that individuals may be considered to have left the group. Interaction networks identify the group's members. Anyone who is not part of the network is not a member.

These are social factist notions; groups are real and they possess a power to impose norms upon the individuals in them. The only thing the social scientist need do is identify the internal workings of the group, role relations, norms, status relationships etc., and he/she understands both the group and the individuals in it.

Barth (1969) questions the primacy given such notions as role, norms, and relations in the identification of ethnicity. He suggests that an ethnic group is not primarily defined by its culture, or its traits, although such traits are an important feature, but by interaction with other groups. In other words, it is interaction which aids in an understanding of why certain ethnic markers are used and not others. This is a systems notion.

What is problematic about identifying ethnicity by traits alone, he suggests, is that different groups within one ethnic group may have differing traits. An analysis of traits does not touch on the "empirical characteristics and boundaries of ethnic groups" (1969:9). He maintains the focus should be on the boundary separating ethnic groups. He discusses such interaction by saying that for it to be stable the two groups must interact consistently in one domain or another. He indicates that certain characteristics are insulated "from confrontation and modification" (Ibid:16). Such interaction is necessarily complementary.

> "Where there is no complementarity there can be no basis for organization on ethnic lines - there will be no interaction, or interaction without reference to ethnic identity." (Ibid:18)

He insists that the investigation of ethnicity, by focusing on totally independent and different groups, is a fruitless activity. But he admits that such an activity is common.[19] He goes on to say that this view does not help the social scientist understand the phenomenon of ethnic grouping.[20]

I am in agreement with Barth when he voices opposition to authors who discuss norms, roles and so forth as the only

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[19] Barth mentions common assumptions which tend to adhere to this way of perceiving ethnic groups. Two of the more notable are: (1) That an ethnic group is self-perpetuating, biologically, and (2) that there are certain cultural values commonly realised by the members.

[20] With the emphasis on separation and differentiation, it follows that those who do not exhibit certain characteristics would not be considered members of a group identified by such characteristics.

means to identify ethnicity. Interaction between groups is what is important. What Barth does not discuss is how such notions may be used as criteria for the fixing of individual or group ethnicity. That is, he does not discuss how the concept of interaction might be used by the observer to justify his/her use of a particular label.

The point is that Barth although discussing interaction in apparently social definitionist terms speaks in systems terms also. An assumption I have made is that this combination leaves his notions open to the criticism that they have an intellectual heritage similar to that of General Systems Theory.

3.2 Conclusion

The notion that the whole is more than the sum of its parts has had a long history in the Social Facts paradigm in social science. General Systems Theory extends these ideas. It is a theory which suggests that interacting systems are open to information which determines the order and organization of the systems. The components of a more complex system are dependent upon their environment for their identity. This is a normative point of view (i.e., one which has as an assumption the subordination of the individual to the dominant group) as are the views presented

by the social factists.[3]

However, General Systems Theory refines these ideas by adding a discussion of the evolution of systems, by focusing on process and organization rather than structure. It provides for context within which systems must be seen to exist. While systems are viewed as "facts," as concrete entities, the theory avoids the functionalist and structural-functionalist emphasis on investigating systems as fixed in time and space.

The notions of General Systems Theory are not very useful for ethnic studies. The problems which were evident for the social factists are still there. That is, the ethnic categories as developed and used by social scientists are not seen to be problematic. Boundaries are essentially fixed.

Interaction is the key to Barth's (1969) framework but here, as was the case for the social factist, there is but little discussion of the role of the observer as the developer of the categories in which he is interested. Barth provides a heuristic for an understanding of what to him are real, factual entities. Thus, it is possible to say the

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[3] It is a view which Zeleny (1980:20) suggests has an "anthropomorphic bias... (which implies)that at all times every component 'knows' the activities and the 'intentions' of every other component". This view he criticises for a certain lack of insight into the internal activities of the components. Maturana and Varela (1975:66) suggest the same thing when they criticise such ideas of performism that imply informational notions. Such organismic theories, they say, that "emphasize the unitary character of living systems but do not provide a mechanism for the definition of the individual" are doomed to failure.

General Systems Theory has advanced social factist notions about ethnicity and its identification to discussions of interaction but still has not come to terms with the role played by the observer where he/she must decide what label is appropriate to apply.

None of the three, Social Facts paradigm, the Social Definition paradigm or General Systems Theory, then, provides adequate understanding for the initial use of an ethnic label as it is used by an investigator. How a social scientist goes about identifying an ethnic, individual or group, remains a bewildering question.

It is at this point that I suggest that the theory of Autopoietic Systems as a meta-theory of observation is useful. Barth has suggested that interaction as an important factor in determining ethnicity but he carries it no further. That is, how does one use the notion to ascribe ethnicity?

The theory of Autopoietic Systems helps an observer come to terms with how this notion of interaction may be used to discuss criteria for identification, for the initial use of an ethnic label. It is the case that neither the social definitionists nor the social factists (systems theorists included) dealt with the role of the observer effectively. But the theory of Autopoietic Systems has as its main focus this very point. And it is this point which helps the theory outdistance either the Social Facts or the Social Definition paradigm. It should also be mentioned that

this is a very recent systems theory and this investigation is an attempt to come to an understanding of the uses to which the theory may be put in the social sciences.

4. THE THEORY OF AUTOPOIETIC SYSTEMS

The review of General Systems Theory in the last chapter has provided a background for an understanding of formal systems theory. That theory was used as an analogy for social systems and proved to be of minimal value in ethnic studies. In this chapter the theory of Autopoietic Systems will be discussed on the meta-theoretical level also. A description of its general notions will be presented first so as to provide an understanding of the theory and how it contrasts with General Systems Theory. The discussion will continue with a presentation of the theory as a heuristic for ethnic studies. What is suggested is that a meta-theory of observation, which may be derived from the theory of Autopoietic Systems, may prove to be a useful heuristic for academics interested in providing criteria for the ethnic labels they use. This meta-theory of observation addresses the role of the observer in scientific investigation, his or her active participation in creating the divisions within the social world and provides a model for conceiving of categories, or systems, if you like.

The theory developed from discussions in theoretical biology. in the early 1970s. The first publication with which I am familiar is Varela, Maturana and Uribe (1974). It is seen by some to have an appeal for the social sciences.

The word "autopoiesis" was coined by the developers of the theory so as to provide a word which had as yet no connotations which would influence readers of the theory.

The word means "self-producing." It is a theory which may have consequences for a number of different scientific fields. Varela (1979) relates the notions to investigations of the immune network and the nervous system. However, since the theory is obviously so very new, the potential in various areas, it seems, has not yet been submitted to thorough investigation. Its use here is one very small attempt to relate the theory to the social sciences. However, judging from the results of the thesis it seems to have potential.

The theory of Autopoietic Systems and General Systems Theory have some similar roots; yet in many ways they differ significantly.[22] The significant differences tend to be epistemological; how this manifests itself will become apparent as I continue.

As was the case with General Systems Theory, this theory deals with systems which comprise interrelated systems and which are, themselves, components of more complex systems. It is used by Maturana and Varela (1975) and Varela (1979) to discuss the characteristics of natural systems.

The unity (the identity) of such a system is maintained because of the constancy of its organization. Organisation in this case refers to "a particular complex of processes,

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[22] Zeleny (1977:13) traces its lineage through "Trentowski's Cybernetika, Bogdanov's Tectology, Leduc's Synthetic Biology, Smut's Holism, and von Hayek's Spontaneous Social Orders."

assembling components into identifiable unity" (Zeleny 1980:5). The spatio-temporal arrangement of the components of the system is referred to as its structure. So as to understand fully any particular system "both aspects organization and structure must be reproduced and their relationship specified" (Ibid:6). That is, both must be used to fully describe a natural system.

The particular components and the structure of a system may change and certainly the system is open to "material and energetic interchange" but the organizational unity of the system must be maintained. This limiting factor means that the unity's own identity must remain constant.

Maturana and Varela (1975:4) state that "an autopoietic machine continuously generates and specifies its own organization through its operation as a system of production of its own components". Thus, a system has its own organization and identity generated from within. It is due to this process of self-organization that such a system is considered autonomous and self-regulating.

The obvious question is: How does change take place? An answer:

> "Autopoietic machines do not have inputs or outputs. They can be perturbated by independent events and undergo internal structural changes which compensate those perturbations. If the perturbations are repeated, the machine may undergo a repeated series of internal changes which may or may not be

identical." (Ibid:7-8)

Such changes are subordinated to the system's own identity. Because of this the system is said to be organizationally closed. This means that any external perturbation or input does not affect change without mediation from within the system. The observer, however, tends to feel that he/she can recognise a direct causal relation between the perturbation and the observed change. What he/she cannot see is the internal organisantional steps through which the unity filters the stimuli. For example, in the human visual system a light stimulus impinges upon the retina and as a result neural impulses travel through many different pathways and are influenced by other impulses along the way. Finally they reach the occipital cortex and the human believes he/she has seen something concrete. It may be that this perception influences some action. An observer of this scene might tend to think that the light caused the action. But did it? No. It cannot be said that such a direct causal connection exists.[23]

One of the consequences of these notions of autonomy and organizational closure is that the individual is not totally subordinated to the larger system of which it is a component. That is to say the more complex system does not

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[23] I should add here that the organization and the way in which it is realised

> "determines the particular perturbations it can suffer without disintegration and hence, the domain of interactions in which it can be observed." (Maturana and Varela 1975:9)

design or set the course for the components' properties: the individual's properties and behavior are aimed at maintaining its own identity and only that.

This is not to say that the larger system does not influence the components. It also has an organization which must be maintained. Thus, the processes within it, which create perturbations for the components, must necessarily affect changes in the structure of the components but not in their organization. If the perturbations are such that the organization and the identity of the components are changed, they will either disintegrate or become something else.[24]

4.0.0.1 Summary

In summarising the theory to this point it is possible to say that a system is dependent to a certain extent on its components for its own organization. Maturana and Varela state this quite clearly.

> "The establishment of any system depends on the presence of the components, and on the kinds of interactions in which they enter, thus, given the

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[24] There are other notions attendant to the theory which deserve mention. First, with regard to energetics and thermodynamics, concerns which shaped General Systems Theory, Maturana and Varela (1975:19) state

> "...these considerations do not enter in the characterization of autopoietic organization. If components can be materialised, the satisfaction of all thermodynamic and energetic relations is implicit."

Secondly, notions of coding and information transfer, also important to General Systems Theory, "do not enter in the realization of a concrete autopoietic system because they do not constitute causal elements". (Ibid:21)

proper concatenation of their interactions, the system is realized." (Ibid:29-30)

Also the organization may have two sources of perturbation, internal and external; these are sources of deformation which may occur in an unpredictable fashion and within limits defined by the entity itself. Both sets of perturbation join together to create a particular phenomenology for a system. Such identifying characteristics will be quite different for otherwise identical systems. By way of illustration, this means that the individuals who make up a species will not suffer identical internal and external perturbations during their development and, thus, will be characteristically different. Both domains of perturbation can be distinguished by the observer but they are virtually indistinguishable for the system itself.

While the developers of the theory (Maturana and Varela, 1975 and Varela, 1979) refuse to comment on the theories use in the social sciences, it has been suggested by Zeleny (1977, 1980) that social systems be considered autopoietic. By this he means social organisations may exhibit a "fuzzily defined quality called life" (1977:13).[25]

Stafford Beer (1975), on the other hand, is not sure of the role to be played by the theory in social science, although he feels there is great potential as yet untapped.

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[25] The theory, among other things, defines criteria for the identification of 'life'.

4.0.1 Autopoiesis and the Individual

With regard to the individual's importance, Varela (1979:45), while referring to the epistemological consequences of the understanding of the autopoietic model, writes

> "the key to the understanding of the biological phenomenology is the understanding of the organization of the individual."

He goes on to suggest that the social Darwinian notions of evolution, species dominance over the individual, etc., had sociological consequences because they were used epistemologically

> "...as a scientific justification for the subordination of the destiny of the individuals to the transcendent values supposedly embodied in notions such as mankind, the state and society... (but) we have...shown that these arguments are not valid in justifying the subordination of the individual to the species... the organization of the individual is autopoietic, and upon this fact rests all its significance: it becomes defined through its existing, and its existing is autopoietic.
>
> "Thus in a realm of biology we see reflected the ethical and, ultimately, political choices of leaving out the view of the autonomy of things, whether animals, or humans. The understanding of life becomes a mirror of our epistemological

choices, which carry over to human actions."
(Ibid:46)

It could be concluded from what has been said that this theory turns social Darwinian notions inside out. The individual becomes the most important element - the foundation upon which the species lies.

4.0.2 Autopoiesis and the Observer

Since the human observer is an autopoietic entity, the notions of the theory of Autopoietic Systems apply directly to discussions of cognition. That is, the structure of the world does not impose itself upon the observer. He/she does not grasp it directly but must process what meets his/her senses. The result is an interpretation, an approximation of what might be considered reality. The observer may, then, be considered an active participant when it comes to the distinction of systems.

"A unity becomes specified through operations of distinction by an observer in a tradition - what we have been calling an observer-community." (Varela 1979:260)

The observer, then, partakes in the process of distinguishing, isolating and individuating the things he/she experiences in his/her environment. The world may look solid and regular but it cannot be pinned down exactly. Thus, Varela states

"The whole experience reveals the co-dependent and relative nature of our knowledge, truly a reflection of our individual collective actions." (Ibid:275)

This in no way suggests that knowledge is completely arbitrary; solipsists do not reign. Knowledge generation is a community affair; and, as was mentioned above, the observer makes cognitive distinctions in line with the traditions of the observer-community of which he/she is part. The world, then, is given us by others as one which has regularities.

4.0.3 Conclusion

As I have shown, the theory of Autopoietic Systems presents the view of systems as organizationally closed. Their activity has the purpose of maintaining their own identity. But at the same time, it is a negotiated existence the component leads within a more complex system.

This emphasis on the individual and negotiated existence enables this theory to encorporate the notions of the Social Definition paradigm while keeping the systems notions of the social factists. It provides a conceptual means for joining both paradigms.[24]

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[24] Varela (1979:70), in comparing the two systems theories suggests that notions of information and purpose inherent in General Systems Theory "pertain to the domain of discourse between observers... (they) may enter for pedagogical purposes. They do not enter in an operational explanation". He states that operational or "Verstehung" explanations have been thoroughly disregarded by the scientific community.

"It is a historical fact that western science has taken a very strong stand in preferring causal

Not only does it apply these notions to systems under investigation, but most importantly it also applies them to the observer of systems. They are used when discussing the knowledge the observer generates. General Systems Theory negates the role of the observer as a biological unit. As was mentioned earlier, for General Systems theorists, the universe in which we live is said to overshadow the "biological bondage" we suffer. Thus, biology is seen to play a minor role in the activities of the observer of systems. Systems are real and impose themselves upon his/her senses. He/she has access to pure knowledge of them.

It is the discussions of the role of the individual (observer included) within systems which suggests to me that the theory of Autopoietic Systems is the more appropriate heuristic for the social sciences. That is, it provides a meta-theory of observation and while doing so allows discussion of the socio-political consequences of the knowledge generated by such observation.

4.1 Use of the theory of Autopoietic Systems as a Heuristic

Does this mean that the investigation of social systems begins with the assumption that such systems are actually autopoietic? No it does not!

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[24](cont'd)explanation since the time of Galileo, and in fact, made Verstehung-type explanations into an enemy, to be banned from science." (Ibid:72)

Whereas General Systems Theory has been used as a metaphor which supposedly aids the social scientist in conceiving of social phenomena, i.e., that social systems are in fact structures which exist and exhibit the characteristics of systems in general, the notions of the theory of Autopoietic Systems do not result in this sort of use.

As has been mentioned general systems theorists who deal in social phenomena discuss the need to discover the characteristics of social systems so that they may be identified. These characteristics are roles, norms or interaction networks. In no case is the real, the concretness, of the system under observation questioned.

Thus, in a discipline such as ethnic studies the descriptors (or labels) used are not seen as problematic. Ethnic groups are considered real, concrete entities, and the social scientist need only discover their unique characteristics to understand them.

On the other hand, the theory of Autopoietic Systems leads to a discussion of the cognition of human observers. It suggests that since human beings (and that includes social scientists) are natural living systems themselves, knowledge is generated in a particular way. It is a negotiated phenomenon. It is not the direct representation of reality the social factist would have one believe. The observer of systems is a participant in the development of the conceived structure and form of the world; the "social

facts" studied are constructs to which a community of scientists agrees. Thus, the systems identified are not reified but have meanings which are negotiated and shared amongst a particular group of individuals. These identified categories have particular socio-political consequences and this is recognized here, whereas in General Systems Theory it is not necessarily.

This is basically a social definitionist view. However, the theory of Autopoietic Systems places the onus for the categorization of the social world on the shoulders of the social scientist. The theory, then, as a heuristic contains notions about observation and observers.

With regard to ethnic studies this means that the descriptors (labels) used to discuss particular groups have a negotiated meaning. Whether the social scientists involved in this process realise this or not is another question. However, the point to be found in the theory of Autopoietic Systems is that this sort of negotiation does go on. The observers are participants in the construction of the view they present of reality. It is this discussion which may be used as an aid by the social scientist for discussions of social phenomena.[3]

With this firmly in mind, in the next section I discuss the methods used by social scientists to identify one particular ethnic community, the "Native" community. I use

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[3] Urion (1978, 1979) has used the theory in this way to aid him in his discussions of linguistics.

the relevant notions of the theory of Autopoietic Systems to help in that discussion. For that reason I continue by using the theory to aid in the development of criteria for the identification of ethnicity, i.e., criteria for the initial use of the label "Native."

4.2 Autopoiesis: a Meta-Theory of Observation

The language of the theory of Autopoietic Systems includes many notions relevant to the observer of a system. One of the primary ideas is that systems contain systems which contain sytems. It takes systems to form systems and systems comprise systems. This at first glance seems a trivial notion; however, the consequences are these:

1. The principles of organization and autonomy which apply at one level of a set of imbricated systems also apply at any other level of observation.
2. The observer of such a system must decide and make explicit at what level he/she is going to fix his/her observations, must provide criteria for the definition of such levels, and must contextualize the level of description with reference to the domain in which he/she includes him/herself.

Varela (1979:107) states,

> "the most fundamental operation is that of distinguishing the 'it' to be studied from its background... A distinction emerges out of an

observer-community that decides the sense in which the distinction is performed. Thus, we have physical boundaries, functional groupings, conceptual categorizations, and so on, in an infinitely variegated museum of possible distinctions.

"The act of distinction reveals a two fold aspect of the observer-community. On the one hand, it reveals the way in which such a distinction is accomplished: the criteria of distinction. On the other hand, it reveals the intention in selecting such criteria of distinction the relative value of the distinction".

The decision about where and how distinction should be made, then, is done knowing full well that the resulting observation and categorization is limited. It should also be understood that such decision is a community based process. That is, it is a social construction.

Varela suggests that to forget that all these notions apply is to be foolhardy. He says that

"...for every system there is an environment which can (if we so desire) be looked at as a larger whole where the initial system participates. Since it would be impractical to do this at all times, we often chop out our system of interest, and put all the rest in the background as 'environment'...To do this on purpose is quite useful; to forget that we did so is quite dangerous.

> "Such hierarchies of imbricated systems give rise to the idea of increasing complexity...let us agree to call a level any one step in this or a similar ladder of imbricated stabilities". (Varela 1976a:64)

Thus, an observer should be able to discuss a context within which the system he/she has identified lies. But how does the observer go about identifying the system of importance to him/her? In other words, what are the criteria and how are they rationalized?

4.2.1 The Observer

The observer, by fixing boundaries and level of observation, is creating a stable cognitive world for him/herself. Varela (1979:275) reinforces this idea when he says that

> "...this world of ours, no matter how we structure it, no matter how well we manage to keep it stable with permanent objects and recurrent interactions, is by definition a world codependent with our experience, and not the ontological reality of which philosophers and scientists alike have dreamed."

These boundaries are set by the observer (they <u>are</u> his/her responsibility) and "are associated with what I shall call a cognitive point of view, that is, a particular set of presuppositions and attitudes, a perspective...it is

associated with some notion of value or interest" (Ibid:85). How he/she sets these boundaries is influenced by the community with which he/she is involved.

At any one of the levels so defined the observer may identify "opposites".[2*] That is, while observing one of the systems, an "other" may be conceived of as influencing it. Changes may be observed in the system under investigation. But the actual interactions between the two may not be specified at this level of observation. What is required is another level of observation to discuss the interactions of the two. In this case another system which incorporates the interactions between the two opposites is what is under investigation (Varela 1976a:64) (This will be made clearer in a moment).[2']

It must be emphasised that this sort of value placed on the environment is done by the observer him/herself. He/she is responsible for the cognitive divisions he/she makes. Varela (1976a:64) continues the discussion this way:

[2*] Throughout this discussion when I use the term "opposites", I mean pairs which may be spoken of as interacting. Such interaction gives definition to both by creating a conceptual boundary between them. Thus, it could be assumed that because of this interaction and the fact that the identity of the interactants depends on it, neither can exist without the other.

[2'] Varela (1979:101) states that "Pairs...make a bridge across one level of our description, and they specify eachother". He gives as an example of such opposites, observer/observed. These are the choice of the author. They are not 'actual' opposites but they <u>are</u> mutually defining and quite appropriate for discussion.

"It is, of course, the case that when we look at natural systems, nowhere do we find opposition apart from our own projections of values... Both (elements in the opposition) generate a whole unity, mutual stabilization and benefits in survival for both."

This discussion needs further explication. I can put it this way: (refer to FIG.1 as you read. It will also be referred to later.)

a. If a system A, composed of systems C and E, is being observed, i.e., what is being investigated is the interactions between the components of A, then, one may also recognize system B at the same level as A. However, what the observer is noting is the interactions of the components of A not the interactions of A and B.

b. If it is the system X the observer is interested in understanding, he/she must observe the interactions of the components of that system, A and B. These paricular observations must not be confused with those at another level. That is, the interactions between A and B, system X, cannot be assumed to be the same for the interactions between C and E, system A. There are unique interactions between the components at any specified level.

c. The imperative is that the observer be precise in the identification of the level at which he/she is making his/her observations and of the system he/she is observing.

When opposites are discussed as interacting in this way they are said to be "structurally coupled." That is, the interactions are between systems which mutually modify each other. And it is the case that only specific characteristics are influenced by certain interactions.

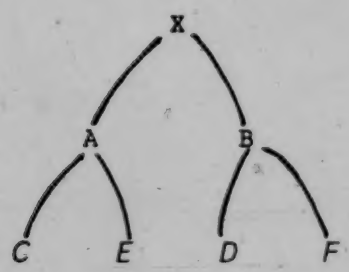

FIG.1 Imbricated systems.

4.2.2 Structural Coupling

4.2.2.1 Interaction

The properties of a system are defined by the interactions in which it partakes (Maturana and Varela 1975:62). These authors add to this idea when they state:

> "Whenever the conduct of two or more unities is such that there is a domain in which the conduct of each is a function of the conduct of the others, it is said that they are coupled in that domain. Coupling

arises as a result of the mutual modifications that interacting unities undergo in the course of their interactions without loss of identity". (Ibid:53)

This type of interaction leads to a new unity which exists at a higher level or domain and which could be referred to as the context for the two interacting systems. It is necessarily different from the level at which the individual interactants are described.

The activity of a unity (a system) within such a context will be "commensurate with the deformations that it suffers without loss of identity, and with the deforming ambient within which it lies..." (Ibid:36). That means that the unity which is under observation may change some of its observed properties. The changes, however, cannot be so great as to change its identity - an identity which is appropriate to the context in which it is being observed.

4.2.2.2 Properties which are affected.

An element of predictability enters here. It suggests that only certain properties will change given certain identified interactions. Within the context distinguished, the unity can suffer only certain deformations if it is to retain its identity. If other changes take place, it will necessarily change its identity or disintegrate as an entity.

4.2.2.3 Deformation

Referring to FIG.1, coupling means that system A becomes a source of deformation for system B; B a source for A whose behavioral compensations in turn act on B; "and so on recursively until the coupling is interrupted. In this manner a chain of interlocking interactions develops" (Varela 1979:48). Given this sort of structural plasticity, it is important to remember that neither system A nor B determines the other; it is not an informative or dependent relationship. It is negotiative.

4.2.2.4 Errors in Observation

It is possible that the observer might make two errors in identifying coupling systems.

1. He/she might mistakenly identify coupling where there is none. Thus, the system assumed to be identified by the coupling does not exist.
2. He/she might not observe the system at the level coupling takes place. Thus, he/she identifies no system at all, confusing the relations at one level for those at another.

4.2.2.5 Summary

In general terms, the concept of structural coupling and the attendant notions imply that the domain of interactions for a particular system specifies its structure and phenomenology. Each unity, which might be considered identical to some other, has a different set of interactions

and, therefore, suffers a different set of deformations. Such deformations in the properties of a system may be considered a "representation of the deforming agent" (Maturana and Varela 1975:74). That is, the deformations in system A may be assumed to result from its interaction with B. The actual interactions between A and B are specified at a different level of interpretation, i.e., at the level of X.

4.2.3 Back to the Observer

Even though a particular system may exist in time and space, it is the observer who is identifying the level of his/her observation. And he/she must specify what it is he/she has done. "It is meaningless to speak of existence without specifying the operation which distinguishes that of which one asserts existence" (Maturana 1980:50). Once it is realised that the observer has a very important role to play, along with his observer-community, in the way the world is distinguished, then, the following statement about epistemology becomes relevant and vital.

> "...no position or view that has any relevance in the domain of human relations can be deemed free from ethical and political implications nor can a scientist consider himself alien to these implications." (Maturana and Varela 1975:73)

(The same, of course, holds true for the discussions

presented here.) Varela (1979:107) reinforces the notion by stating that "a distinction cannot exist without its concomitant value."

4.3 Discussion: Relation to "Indian" as Ethnic Category

In the next chapter I review a range of academic articles which investigate "Natives" for the criteria used for the initial ascription of the label. That is, I raise the question: How did the authors come to use the label to refer to certain groups or individuals? What follows here is a discussion of the notions of the meta-theory of observation as they relate to the development of criteria for the ascription of the label "Native."

1. The observer is responsible for the demarcation of the level, within a set of systems, at which he/she will conduct the investigation. It is also his/her responsibility to decide on the system he/she will "chop out" of that level - by doing so, the system and the environment surrounding that system are identified as are the interactions in which the system partakes.

For this thesis, this means that the articles reviewed in chapter Five must (as they identify "Native") present a situation in which interaction takes place between two groups or individuals. This must be an interaction in which there is mutual modification and one in which the groups or individuals may be given a particular identity. The

interaction must be given meaning by providing a discussion of the interaction itself. Referring back to FIG. 1, this means that the interaction between a "Native" group or individual and some "other" (represented by systems A and B) must be discussed in terms of some other domain, system X, a system which gives meaning (for author or reader) to, and discusses the interrelationships between, A and B. The interaction and the meaningful discussion of it as a unit itself I will term the context for the investigation. This context gives meaning to the descriptor used. Thus, "Natives" must in some way be seen as interacting with other groups within the society. A discussion of that interaction will give meaning to the term "Native" by pointing to the situations in which "Native" is assumed to be an appropriate descriptor.

2. At any one level of analysis, opposites may be identified. For example, in Chapter Five when individuals or groups are given the ethnic descriptor "Indian" etc., they must be placed in opposition to some "other." That is, by placing these two systems in opposition to one another and by discussing the one to be observed, the Native, in terms of the influences of the other upon it, the observer may, on the one hand, identify a context for the description of the unity investigated, or, on the other hand, uncover a boundary between the two which will tend to separate them. Both activities will give meaningful (for author and reader)

identification to each group.

Thus, the properties (of the group) being investigated ought to be the properties which are affected by the influence of the "other." And it is these properties and changes in them which will be seen as important for its identification as "Native" in that context.

3. Since context, and therefore identification, are dependent on the investigator's conceptual framework, identification is necessarily mobile. If at any one point identity and context are fixed by an observer, verification must be forthcoming. Such verification will be provided, or not, by changes which are observed in the behavior or characteristics relevant to the context identified.

If in Chapter Five, the descriptor "Native" is used in an appropriate context, the observer should be able to verify this identification by observing changes in specific characteristics which have been hypothesized to be influenced by the interaction of the "Native" with some other.

4. By setting the context and boundary the author gives the reader some hint of his value orientation toward, and frame of reference regarding the meaning of the descriptor used. The operation of distinguishing and defining what it is that is being discussed is acknowledged as not being value-free. It is based on community traditions which influence (a) the

author's method of defining the "it," (b) what questions are asked of "it," and (c) what conclusions are reached.[30]

5. Errors in observation may occur. This means that it is possible for an investigator to identify a pair of opposites which are not in fact interacting. In Chapter Five, I assume it is likely that investigators could mistakenly apply the ethnic descriptor "Native" to interactions which do not support the use of the term. It also means that, if the "Native" is not discussed as interacting with some "other" in terms of a single system, there is no meaningful identification whatsoever made.

4.4 Criteria for fixing "Native" identity

In this section I will outline criteria based on the previous discussion which might be useful for the affixing of the label "Native." This is an address to observers who wish to investigate "Natives." What these criteria do is help provide the readers and authors of academic studies with a meaningful understanding of the appropriate context within which the label "Native" may be used. They also provide an understanding of deciding which characteristics are appropriate for study. The resulting criteria for the

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[30] Kuhn (1970) discusses the affects of a scientific community on the processes which the individuals within that community go through during investigations. The notion is similar to that presented here.

ascription of a "Native" identity to individuals or groups are the following:

1. Interaction between the "Native" and some "other" must be discussed.
2. a. The specific interaction which is investigated, be it of groups or individuals, must be given meaning by referring to it as a single instance, representing a population of these types of interactions.
   b. The discussion must take into account the mutually modifying nature of the relationship. For example, the invocation of the term "Native" or a homologous term, invokes the term "non-Native" as a salient descriptor which has meaning only in reference to the term "Native." The interaction of the two must be specified, then, in some well defined context.
3. While affixing such identities by explaining as thoroughly as possible the context in which they apply, the observer must decide which characteristics are important for investigation given the context. For example, the context of the exercise of political power, or the related context of economic power, may be discussed with the descriptors "Native" and "non-Native." The object of description is the exercise of those powers by "Native" people vis-a-vis some others. This arbitrary (not given in nature) specification of context and population boundaries are mutually contextualizing: the precise identification of

descriptive domains invokes population descriptors according to the salience of context.

4. Verification that nearly appropriate descriptors have been used in describing a social situation may be had by comparing the interactions of apposed populations to see if the appositions in fact specify a coherent descriptive domain. In the example given above, "Native" and "non-Native" are precise enough terms with which to focus upon the exercise of political power by "Natives" or concerning "Natives." They are not nearly precise enough to describe a domain of individual, personal interactions.

These four points if adhered to should provide a meaningful and appropriate understanding of the ethnic label "Native," given the context the investigation purports to describe. That is, there will be presented a meaningful and appropriate impression of what it means to be "Native" in Canada at this particular time, within the descriptive domain invoked by the interaction.

What follows in the next chapter is a case study. The criteria outlined will be used as a basis upon which to critique academic studies which purport to investigate "Natives."

5. "INDIAN" AS AN ETHNIC LABEL: A CASE STUDY

5.1 Purpose for the Study

As was mentioned in Chapter One, the purpose of this study is to discuss criteria by which a social science investigator undertaking an academic study of an ethnic group or of ethnic individuals identifies the community, group or individuals he wishes to discuss. In other words, criteria for ascribing an ethnic label are the focus. This study addresses the identification of "Native" communities, groups or individuals. However, the criteria developed in the previous chapter, I suggest, might well be useful for ethnic studies in general where the identification of the community under observation is of paramount importance.

5.2 Method

An initial selection of 108 studies was made using a number of different bibliographies (see Appendix A). The criteria for this selection were as follows:

(a) the study must have been published between 1970 and 1982.

(b) it must be about "Indians"; "Native people"; or "Indian" or "Native"/"White" or "non-Native" differences, similarities or relations. The words "Indian", "Métis", "Eskimo" or "Native" had to appear.

(c) it must be about a Canadian situation.

(d) it must be a study of contemporary populations or individuals. That is, purely historical studies were not considered.

Of the 108 studies identified in this way, twenty were selected, using a table of random numbers, for review. This was so as to remove any prior bias which might have been present. Appendix B presents the journals and the dates of publication represented by the final selections. Twenty studies were selected since it was assumed that such a number would provide a view of a number of different techniques for the ascribing of an ethnic label. It is not intended that these be a representative sample of all such techniques. These studies provide a locus for a discussion of the notions presented in Chapter Four. Although the number twenty is arbitrary, it does provide room for the categorization of methods. A number such as three or four would certainly not have provided such an opportunity.

During the random selection it was found that some of the articles were American in origin and content, were theoretical discussions or were historical in nature. These were discarded and replacements found by referring to the table of random numbers again. The reviews of the twenty articles used appear in Appendix C. What is presented here is a categorization of the articles and the characteristics representative of each category as well as a discussion of whether the authors followed the criteria developed earlier.

5.2.1 The Critiques

What is discussed in the following is the methods for the ascription of ethnicity in twenty selected academic studies which deal with "Natives."

The individual reviews for each article (Appendix C) suggested to me three categories into which they could be divided. The characteristics of each category were selected on the basis of the discussion in Chapter Four. That is, the question was asked: Were the criteria followed and if not, was there an attempt to develop criteria?

In general, each category discusses the way in which the label "Native" has been given meaning.

As each category is discussed, the studies representing them are identified by author and number - the number refers to that given each review in Appendix C.

I found that the studies reviewed in Category A followed most closely the criteria developed in Chapter Four. By so doing, I suggest, they ascribe ethnicity appropriately. The studies included in the second and third categories, B and C, did not follow the suggested criteria. Thus, ethnicity seems poorly ascribed resulting in the conclusion that the results of the studies must not necessarily apply to the ethnic group investigated. Categories B and C have been dealt with separately since there are significant differences between the two.

In Category B there is an attempt to develop context for an understanding of the ethnic marker, however, this

attempt fails for a number of reasons which will be discussed. The studies represented in Category C, on the other hand, make no such attempt, and, of course, the result is that the marker appears to have no immediately recognizable meaning for the author or reader.

What follows is a description of each category. It discusses the general characteristics of each and whether each followed the criteria for ethnic ascription developed in Chapter Four.

5.2.1.1 Category A

Two studies fall into this category. They adhere to the criteria developed in Chapter Four. The characteristics are the following.[31]

General Characteristics

1. In each case two communities are identified as being in some way opposed and interacting. It is this interaction with the "non-Native" which infuences specific characteristics within the "Native" community or individual. The latter is shown to develop its own responses to influences on it - and these responses are only in particular areas. That is, the characteristics seen as important for observation are described

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[31] They are by number and title:
#6 Colonial Transfer: Abandonment or Disguised Domination?
#8 The Social Correlates of Nationalism: A study of Native Indian leaders in a Canadian Internal Colony.

as resulting from the interaction between the two communities. The result is that the label used to describe the ethnic group is seen to be used appropriately.

2. This interaction is given meaning by the author and for the reader. That is, the interactions between the two communities are given a single descriptor and are understood to be representative of a unique set of interactions between these two communities wherever they interact in Canada. The context is described as "Internal Colonialism." In this context, it is suggested that interactions between the "Native" group or individual and some other (say, the government) is a microcosm of the relations which take place within Canada generally between the "Native" and some "other."
3. In each case the level of analysis is clear. That is, it is clear that either a collectivity or a number of independent individuals is being discussed in the specified context.
4. The authors' assumptions include the processual nature of the change that takes place in individuals or in groups. In no case are the influences between the two interactants presented as being one-way. For example, the government does not impose some sort of outcome

on the "Indian" in question. The collectivity or the individual is shown to develop unique responses to external influences. Both communities are presented as interacting and as being members of the same society.

Illustrations

Let me illustrate these characteristics using examples from the representative studies.

Mortimer's (1975) study (#6) of Colonial Transfer of authority over resources etc. from government to an Indian Band discusses, from the beginning, the influences on the Band's social activity of government action. These interactions are discussed as being representative of the "internal colonial" model. Thus, the context in which the descriptor "Indian" is to be understood is set. That is, the Band/government dichotomy is described and the interactions between the two is given meaning as a single system which is termed "internal colonialism."

During the investigation the descriptor is shown to be appropriate in that it is the Band's reactions to government influences which are discussed.

The level of analysis is clear. It is the interactions of a group with government that is

discussed. And this is presented as a microcosm of the relations which hold between the "Native" community and its administrators in general. This is described as the colonial relationship.

The study concentrates on an historical discussion of the life of the Band and, thus, clarifies further the meaning of the term "colonial."

Boldt's (1981) study of Indian leadership (#8) is of interest since it is individuals who are investigated and not one specific group. During the presentation of the paper these individuals are placed in two contexts. The first is as Indians who interact with the dominant society in a colonial relationship. It is this interaction which helps mould some of their political attitudes. But they are also presented as interacting with the non-leadership segment of the Indian community. This represents a second context which also helps mould political leanings and attitudes. It is this context which provides meaning for the descriptor "leader." The study, then, investigates both Indians and leaders and creates context within which each descriptor is given meaning.

In neither case in this category is there any suggestion that what is discussed may be identified as "Indian" only. The identification is relevant to

the context mentioned and is taken no further. It is also the case that the context is quite clear, and thus, the authors' impressions of what it means to be "Indian" are also.

Were the Criteria used?

I will state each criterion and discuss whether it was used.

The first criterion suggested is:

> Interaction between the "Native" and some "other" must be discussed.

In the case of this category the "Native" is presented as interacting with some other group in society. And it is this interaction which is seen as modifying certain "Native" characteristics.

The second criterion is:

> a. The specific interaction which is investigated, be it of groups or individuals, must be given meaning by referring to it as a single instance, representing a population of these types of interactions.
> b. The discussion must take into account the mutually modifying nature of the relationship. For example, the invocation of the term "Native" or a homologous term, invokes the term "non-Native" as a salient descriptor which has meaning only in reference to the term "Native." The interaction of the two must be specified, then, in some well defined context.

The interaction is discussed as a colonial relationship. However, the specific interactions and the mutual influences are not discussed to any great extent. Thus, the meaning of the word "colonial" is

not well explicated. The authors could have perhaps given the term clearer meaning by discussing the mutual interactions in greater detail.

The third criterion is:

> While affixing such identities by explaining as thoroughly as possible the context in which they apply, the observer must decide which characteristics are important for investigation given the context. For example, the context of the exercise of political power, or the related context of economic power, may be discussed with the descriptors "Native" and "non-Native." The object of description is the exercise of those powers by "Native" people vis-a-vis some others. This arbitrary (not given in nature) specification of context and population boundaries are mutually contextualizing: the precise identification of descriptive domains invokes population descriptors according to the salience of context.

In both studies cited, there is discussion of the specific characteristics which are affected by the relationship. In the first case (Mortimer, 1975), it is the Band's political organization; and in the second (Boldt, 1981), it is individual political orientation.

The fourth criterion is:

> Verification that nearly appropriate descriptors have been used in describing a social situation may be had by comparing the interactions of apposed populations to see if the appositions in fact specify a coherent descriptive domain. In the example given above, "Native" and "non-Native" are precise enough terms with which to focus upon the exercise of political power by "Natives" or concerning "Natives." They are not nearly precise enough to describe a domain of individual, personal interactions.

In both studies reviewed the characteristics are discussed as being influenced by the "other."

It appears as though the criteria developed were followed. Where these studies require more thorough work is in the discussion of what the term "colonial" means. That is, how the two groups interacted and the results of the interaction could have been discussed in greater detail.

Since there is such thorough discussion of the label "Indian," it appears that the label fits this context and only this context. This means that another identification could apply to the individuals and groups investigated in another context. Thus, identity is characterized as being mobile.

5.2.1.2 Category B

I include eight studies in this category. There is an attempt on the part of the authors here to develop an understanding of the term "Native." However this fails. The reasons will become.[32]

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[32] They are by number and title:
#1 Modernization and Fertility: the case of the James Bay Indians.
#2 Canadian Indian Migrants and Impression Management of ethnic stigma.
#4 The Economic Adjustment of Indians in Winnipeg, Canada.
#10 Self-Concept and Attitudes: A Comparison of Canadian Indian and non-Indian Students.
#11 Status and Identification Grouping Amongst Urban Indians.
#14 The Incarcerated Native.
#15 Conflict, Confrontation and Social Change on the St.

[32]

General Characteristics

1. In all cases there is the recongition of two distinct communities. The "Native" and the "non-Native."
2. Appropriate context is not developed, however. There is no discussion of the two interacting in what could be considered a unique social context such as is evidenced by the internal colonial model. Most often the discussions centre on the economic and social disparity between the two.
3. The individual or group is identified (using various indicia) as "Native" because he/she happens to live in a particular area, perhaps because he/she looks "Native," because he/she has a treaty number or is listed as "Native" on an "official" document. The interactions in which he/she partakes in specific contexts are seen to have no bearing on ethnicity as ascribed by the author.
4. The individuals or groups investigated are assumed to exhibit "Indianness" in all their behaviors. Thus, no matter what the context the authors feel free to suggest that any characteristics measured are "Native"

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[32](cont'd)Regis Reserve.
#16 Rapid Socio-Cultural Change and Student Mental Health.

characteristics. Since this is so, verification that the characterisitcs investigated (e.g. I.Q., fertility rate) are those of "Natives", is not present.

5. In some cases the attendant assumptions are that the "Native" society is viewed as segregated and static and is investigated as though fixed in time. In these even the elements of the "Native" group observed (e.g. parents and children) are seen as separate and interacting very little. They are most often presented as in conflict. Thus, the process of change is implied to be step-like (e.g. children are more modern than their parents).

Three of the studies discuss change in the "Native" population in terms of an acculturative model (e.g.#1, #4, #16). That is, the dominant society is seen as more advanced and the "Native" is changing, becoming "modern," as a result of the influences from the more powerful society. In all studies the "Native" culture is viewed as being manipulated by forces from outside itself. Coupled with this model, and evident in all but one case - #15, is an image of the "Native" as "traditional," "pre-modern" or "disadvantaged." In other words, he/she is seen as economically and socially backward. The

impression gained from these studies is that it is because of what is seen to be the premodern, static nature of any "Native" society that the economic and social disparities are present. It is also an impression that these societies are outside the "mainstream" of Canadian social life. They are appendages which eventually will be absorbed. However, it will take some time since the "Native" is characterized as so traditionally oriented.

Illustrations

Romaniuk's (1974) comparison of the fertility of two generations of James Bay "Indian" women (#1) investigated the women of six communities which were said to suffer similar economic, ecological and social circumstances. This identifies the area, and the people living there, as economically depressed, ecologically different and socially backward. It is different from other areas in Canada and presented as separated from the rest of the Canadian landscape. It is assumed that those who live there are "Indians." And it is because they live where they do and as they do that the author feels free to use the label "Indian" to identify them. Thus, what is presented is an investigation of individuals whose identity is assumed by the author to be a

given fact and always present.

The acculturation of the "Indian" is discussed in the study in the following way. The younger "Indian" women are shown to be more fertile than the older. It is suggested that this is so because of the "modernizing" influences through which the community is going. Since it is further suggested that this is probably the case for all "Indian" groups in Canada, what is implied is that all "Indians" are equally "pre-modern" and are being drawn into the modern world however unwillingly.

Kerri's (1976) study of "Indian" adjustment to the city (#4) is similar. It suggests that the economic depression of the reserve leaves the "Native" ill-equipped for economic adjustment. He suggests that the "Indian" and his/her ancestors were "unwillingly dragged" into the industrial society of North America. However, given more economic support and more training the "Indian" can succeed. This is an example of the use of the acculturation model. It is the case that the "Indian" is thus stigmatized as having adjustment problems (perhaps due to his/her own unwillingness to advance) when it comes to urban life.

The study of the "Incarcerated Native" (#14) by Lane et. al. (1978) is different in that it does not suggest the "Native" position is due to

backwardness. In fact, the "internal colonial" model is hinted at as a reason for the "Native" position within Canadian society. The reason I include this paper in this category is that the colonial context is not used to suggest what specific characteristics of "Indian" inmates should be investigated. What is presented in the end is merely a listing of the personal characteristics of inmates who happened to be listed as "Native" on the institutions records. None of these characteristics was necessarily affected by the colonial relationship. If any was, it was not made clear.

Denton's (1975) investigation of "Indian" impression management (#2) and Nagler's (1970) study of status and identification in urban "Indians" (#11) deal with "Indianness" in a social definitionist-interactionist fashion. In both "Indians" are shown in social situations where the interaction between individual "Indians" and "Whites" is seen to affect the "Indians" presentation of identity. What becomes evident is that although interaction is seen to affect the presentation of self, nothing affects the "fact" that "Indians" are "Indians" no matter what the context. That is, the label "Indian" is seen to apply to the individual at all times. The category "Indian" is seen to be stigmatized and labelled

category in which the "Indian" feels inferior and acts accordingly always.

These last two attempts to develop meaning for the relationship and for the labels "Indian" and "White" is inappropriate since there is no discussion of mutual interaction and its affect on both parties. At the same time there is apparently no thought given to mobility of the identity "Indian." As far as the investigator is concerned the individual subjects are appropriately identified as "Indian" in all situations.

Frisch's (1971) study of the St. Regis reserve (#15) is of note here. Interaction between the reserve and other communities is discussed in terms which recognize mutual influences. But because of the lack of identifying a single system which would discuss the interactions and give them meaning, the author has avoided developing a context for an understanding of the label "Indian". There is no mention of which of the interactions, or parts of them, are necessarily unique to "Indian/White" relations.

The author leaves the reader with the distinct impression that "Indian" reserves interact within the society as would any other group. He thus denies the term "Indian" any import at all, unknowingly destroying any special meaning (for the reader and

author) which might be attached to the label "Indian."

Were the criteria used?

I will being with a statement of each criterion and follow each with a discussion of whether each was used.

The first criterion is:

> Interaction between the "Native" and some "other" must be discussed.

What is presented in all the cases in this category is an understanding of the need to discuss two different communities. However, in some studies the interaction between the two is seen as being one-way, i.e., the "Indian" is being acculturated by the dominant society. In other studies this interaction is discussed on the individual level and it forces the "Indian" to respond in certain ways.

The second criterion is:

> a. The specific interaction which is investigated, be it of groups or individuals, must be given meaning by referring to it as a single instance, representing a population of these types of interactions.
> b. The discussion must take into account the mutually modifying nature of the relationship. For example, the invocation of the term "Native" or a homologous term, invokes the term "non-Native" as a salient descriptor which has meaning only in reference to the term "Native." The interaction of the two must be specified, then, in some well defined context.

All these studies attempt to given meaning to the

term "Indian." However, there is no discussion of the interactions between each as representing a single system such as is evident in discussions of internal colonialism.

The third criterion is:

> While affixing such identities by explaining as thoroughly as possible the context in which they apply, the observer must decide which characteristics are important for investigation given the context. For example, the context of the exercise of political power, or the related context of economic power, may be discussed with the descriptors "Native" and "non-Native." The object of description is the exercise of those powers by "Native" people vis-a-vis some others. This arbitrary (not given in nature) specification of context and population boundaries are mutually contextualizing: the precise identification of descriptive domains invokes population descriptors according to the salience of context.

Since there is little development of context, i.e., the mutual interaction between the two groups, it is difficult to discern whether or not the specific characteristics investigated are in fact those of "Indians."

The fourth criterion is:

> Verification that nearly appropriate descriptors have been used in describing a social situation may be had by comparing the interactions of apposed populations to see if the appositions in fact specify a coherent descriptive domain. In the example given above, "Native" and "non-Native" are precise enough terms with which to focus upon the exercise of political power <u>by</u> "Natives" or <u>concerning</u> "Natives." They are not nearly precise enough to describe a domain of individual, personal interactions.

Again since context was not developed, the characteristics investigated are not shown to be those affected by the interactions between two communities.

It is important to refer back to the "Errors in Observation" mentioned in Chapter Four. In this category it is evident that although oppposition and interaction are discussed, they are not the interactions unique to "Indian/White" relations. The assumed identification of such a unique context is simply incorrect. The systems identified as "Indian/White" coupling are not that. The result of this imprecision is that although an attempt was made to develop meaning for the descriptor "Indian," it failed leaving behind a residue of inappropriate meaning.

Those meanings include the conceptual separation of the "Indian" from Canadian society; the fact that anyone who may be identified as "Indian," using whatever indicators, is always "Indian" no matter what the context; and the "Indian" is seen as being socially, economically, and geographically deprived and disadvantaged. In one case, Frisch (1971) (#15), there is the avoidance of giving any specific meaning to the label so as to show the "Indian" as being the same as all other groups within society. The amounts to a

denial of any special meaning being given to the ethnic label.

The point being made here is not that any one particular meaning has been given the label "Indian", but that these meanings, whatever they be, are inappropriate.

5.2.1.3 Category C

This category is best divided into two sub-groups. Sub-group 1 contains six studies while sub-group 2 contains four. There is no attempt in any of these studies to develop an understanding of the context in which the label "Indian" might be appropriately applied.[33]

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[33] The studies by number and title are:
Sub-group 1:
#5 Some Effects of Frontier Television in a Canadian Eskimo Community.
#7 Verbal Regulation of Behavior and I.Q. in Canadian Indian and White Children.
#9 Ecological and Cultural Factors in Spatial Perceptual Development.
#12 Co-operation and Competition among Blackfoot Indian and Urban Canadian Children.
#17 Education and Values in an Indian Community.
#20 Self-Evaluation of Native and Euro-Canadian Students.
Sub-group 2:
#3 University Success for Canadian Indians.
#13 Modification of Behavior Patterns in Indian Children.
#18 The Education of Canadian Indians: An In-depth study of Nine Families.
#19 The presentation of Self in Household Settings.

General Characteristics

1. None of the studies in either sub-group of this category discusses the descriptor "Indian," or whatever is used, in any sort of context. The meaning of the term is supposedly self-evident. The "Indian" is not discussed as opposed to or interacting with some other.

   The papers typically begin by stating that the purpose of the investigation was the study of "Indians". There is no question that the individuals who are the subjects are to be thought of as "Native." As a result the ethnic label seems to be taken to apply in all circumstances in which the individual finds him/herself.

2. Since the label is seen as unproblematic, the assumption appears to be that any characteristics investigated are those of "Indians" and all "Indians" have similar characteristics. The verification that the characteristics studied are in fact those of "Indians" is not provided since the context for the use of the descriptor is not provided.

3. The characteristics observed are assumed to be both those of "Natives" and relatively fixed and stable. It is only under the influence of another culture that they are affected. Six of

the ten studies (#3, #5, #7, #9, #13, #19) imply that such changes take place because of acculturation. In these the image of the "Native" is, as it was in Category B, one of a community which is separate from the rest of society but one which is being forced into the modern world.

Comparison of Sub-groups and Illustrations

The sub-groups in this category differ in one significant respect. That is the way in which comparisons of groups under observation are made.

Sub-group 1 makes such comparisons explicit the other does not. For example, in sub-group 1 Coldevin's (1976) study of frontier television (#5) on information levels of "Eskimos" compares people in Frobisher Bay with those in Fort Chimo. There is no discussion of what it means (i.e., in what social context the label "Eskimo" might be understood) to be "Eskimo" in Canada. That is, no context is developed for an understanding of the descriptor. However, what is implied is that the southern culture imposes itself on those who possess television sets.

Schubert and Cropley's (1972) study (#7) compares verbal behavior and I.Q. of four groups of people, two "Indian" and two "White." It is

suggested that those living closer to urban environments approximate more closely the characteristics of the dwellers of dominant urban society. In this study there is no discussion of the meaning of either of the ethnic descriptors. Nor is there a discussion of where they might be appropriately applied. Implicit is an image of the "Indian" as traditional and backward. They say, "The intellectual development of Indian children is adequate in terms of their traditional way of life...".

Bienvenue's (1978) investigation of self-evaluation (#20) compares "Native" and "Euro-Canadian" students. Again the meanings of the descriptors are not discussed. It is left up to the reader to decide what they mean. The individuals observed are assumed to be representative of the people in that ethnic group in all contexts.

In each case there is no discussion of these contrasting groups as interacting and mutually defining. It is assumed that an understanding of the characteristics of each group, independently, will provide an understanding of what the groups themselves are. The labels applied to groups and individuals are not considered problematic.

Sub-group 2 makes no such comparisons between groups. There is no mention made of some other

contrasting group. (However, each author implies that there is an other contrasting group simply because there are people who the authors would, if pressed, describe as being other than "Indian".)

For example, Berger's (1973) studies of nine "Indian" families (#18), while giving no meaning to the initial use of the ethnic label, investigates the attitudes of these families toward education. These attitudes are not discussed as being affected in any way by anything. They are presented as fixed facts as is the category "Indian".

Walker's (1977) discussion of the effects of special training on the academic success of "Status Indians" at university (#3), while assuming that the ethnic descriptor applies in all contexts, also finds the identity of the individuals unproblematic.

Were the criteria used?

I will state each criterion and follow each with a statement of whether it was used.

The first criterion is:

> Interaction between the "Native" and some "other" must be discussed.

There is no discussion of the interaction between two groups. Although there must be the recognition that there are two: "Indian" and "White."

The second criterion is:

> a. The specific interaction which is investigated, be it of groups or individuals, must be given meaning by referring to it as a single instance, representing a population of these types of interactions.
> b. The discussion must take into account the mutually modifying nature of the relationship. For example, the invocation of the term "Native" or a homologous term, invokes the term "non-Native" as a salient descriptor which has meaning only in reference to the term "Native." The interaction of the two must be specified, then, in some well defined context.

Since there is no discussion of the interaction between two groups, there is no mention made of the type of relationship such might represent. Most often interaction is implicitly assumed to be an acculturative interaction in which the "Native" is being changed.

The third criterion is:

> While affixing such identities by explaining as thoroughly as possible the context in which they apply, the observer must decide which characteristics are important for investigation given the context. For example, the context of the exercise of political power, or the related context of economic power, may be discussed with the descriptors "Native" and "non-Native." The object of description is the exercise of those powers by "Native" people vis-a-vis some others. This arbitrary (not given in nature) specification of context and population boundaries are mutually contextualizing: the precise identification of descriptive domains invokes population descriptors according to the salience of context.

Since context in terms of interaction is not developed, it is impossible to relate the characteristics investigated to it. The impression

given by the authors is that any characteristics which he/she might wish to investigate are necessarily those of "Indians" so long as the subjects may be identified as "Indian."

the fourth criterion is:

> Verification that nearly appropriate descriptors have been used in describing a social situation may be had by comparing the interactions of apposed populations to see if the appositions in fact specify a coherent descriptive domain. In the example given above, "Native" and "non-Native" are precise enough terms with which to focus upon the exercise of political power by "Natives" or concerning "Natives." They are not nearly precise enough to describe a domain of individual, personal interactions.

The characteristics investigated are not shown to be influenced by any sort of interaction, since context in which the label might be understood was not developed.

There are a variety of meanings which attend the label "Native" in this category. The first, and perhaps most obvious, is that "Natives" are seen as being outside society and must suffer acculturation before becoming members of that society. The second, shown in cases #18 and #19, suggests that the "Native" has been acculturated and that he/she is in no different position within the society than are any other individuals. This denies any special meaning to the term "Native." It is also evident that since the authors do not develop context, the

label "Native" once ascribed to an individual or group is thought of as permanent. There is no room for conceiving of mobility of identity.

Summary

These categories then show a wide range of methods for the initial ascription of the label "Native." The first, Category A, provides what seems to be appropriate discussion of context for the use of the descriptor. It is thus given a particular connotation - a meaning derived from an understanding of the interactions between two communities. The second, Category B, provides inadequate discussion of the context in which the label might be applied. The result is that discussions of separation and non-interaction develop a different connotation for the ascribed ethnicity. The third, Category C, uses no criteria whatsoever for the understanding of the ethnic label. An understanding of the context in which the label applies is left more or less up to the reader. Although in many studies a connotation is given simply because of discussions within the study itself.

5.2.2 Interpretation and Discussion

5.2.2.1 Social Facts or Social Definition?

The studies reviewed in Categories B and C, when dealing with ethnic identification, appear to deal with social facts. Although the characteristics of "Natives" may be assumed to change, often with difficulty, the identification itself is ever present. The ethnic group "Natives" is a real, concrete entity. Also problematic is the fact that the ethnic label is presented as being relevant for the individuals under observation in all contexts. Besides this, the observer is not seen to participate in separating out such an identity. He/she is essentially denied any responsibility. What he/she is studying is the world as it presents itself to him/her. This is very much a social facts point of view.

These remarks apply to all the studies even though in some cases the authors have taken social definitionist stances when it comes to the body of the investigation.

It is Category A which illustrates a different way of conceiving of the groups discussed. In this category the authors undertake the study of the characteristics (of "Native" groups or individuals) whose change is affected by specific context and the resulting interactions. As a result, what becomes apparent is that the label used is not necessarily to be considered as holding in all contexts. This is not made explicit but seems to be understood. I

assume that the authors would consider another label appropriate when discussing the same groups or individuals in different contexts. This is basically a social definitionist view. But it is applied to the investigator and the way in which he/she goes about creating categories. In Categories B and C this is not the case.

Implicit within Category A is the notion of negotiation, the social definitionist view. This holds in two ways: First, the "Native" and the "other" interact so as to negotiate their places within society. Secondly, the implication is that the ethnic label is negotiated, given meaning and used in a discriminating manner by the authors themselves. Such negotiation is not present in the other two categories. There is no denial that the group "Indian" may under certain circumstances be considered a "social fact"; but it is the notion of context appropriate to the label which softens the factist points of view found in Categories B and C. Thus in this category social definitionist notions are applied to the observer in an attempt to come to terms with how "social facts" might be understood.

5.2.2.2 Meanings

Category A develops an understanding of the term "Native" within the context of a specific type of interaction, i.e., internal colonialism. It is discussed as a microcosm of the larger social context which influences

certain notable characteristics within the "Native" group or individual. Very much aware of the political consequences of labelling the authors developed a context which provides a particular meaning. In all the Categories the development of context or the lack of it becomes an important indicator of what the observers feel the ethnic label means. Thus they show they begin with a particular perception of "Natives."

In Category A the authors assume that the "Native," group or individuals, have a measure of control over their own lives and the ways in which they approach social life. Their behavior, whether it be conflict resolution or political attitudes, is something they decide upon. They organize their own positions in life. Change is a processual matter. However, there is the assumption that the "Native" is in a postion of considerably reduced power within society. In the colonial context there is a lack of authority over factors which affect their lives (when compared to other groups in society). However, this does not imply intellectual or social deprivation. Above all the "Native" is viewed as an integral part of the society but not one without a unique place.

This, then, is all part of the meaning applied to the label. It is generated because the authors have taken the time to develop a context in which the label may be understood.

in Categories B and C there are basically three assumptions of note:

1. Change, where it is discussed (e.g. between generations), is not presented as process and interaction but is presented as disjointed and step-like. It is a conflict creating affair. For example, Coldevin's (1976) analysis of the effects of frontier television (#5) or Friesen's (1974) study of education and values (#17) discuss intergenerational change this way. Children are seen to be somewhat "modernised" while the parents are seen as "traditionalists." They are viewed as separate and alone.
2. In 9 cases an acculturative model is appealed to. The "Native" is assumed to be under the influence of the dominant society. The "modern" technological world is pulling the "pre-modern" into the twentieth century. The dominant culture is imposing ways of acting on the "Native." As a result of this economic and social backwardness the "Native" suffers economic and social consequences.[34]

Immediately, the image of the "Native" person is that he or she must be undereducated or disadvantaged, outside the social world. Many of the other studies in Categories B and C simply portray the "Native" as different.

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[34] See for example, Romaniuk (1974) (#1): a study of Fertility differences in James Bay "Indians"; or Berry (1971) (#9): a study of ecological and cultural factors in spatial perceptual development.

3. Of note are three studies, Frisch (1971), Denton (1970) and Berger (1973), which, each in its own way, deny any special status within the society for the "Native." The term has no special meaning. That is, there is no discussion of the contextualized meaning of the label. In fact the authors are at great pains to show that the "Native" has become just like others within the society.

These assumptions indicate a wide variety of meaning applied to the label "Native." While Category A presents a contextual meaning for what it means to be "Native," one which is not commonly held: that "Natives" are subject to colonial relationships, the other two provide what may be considered commonly understood meanings: the "Native" is socially and economically backward and suffering from his/her chosen position in life, or the "Native" has no special place within society. It seems that Categories B and C falter because of a lack of contextualized discussion of the meaning of the label used.

I suggest it is not too harsh to characterize the meanings developed in Categories B and C as stereotypes.[35]

These notions of segregation and backwardness applied to the "Native" have been with us for a long time. Documented evidence of such assumptions held by early English colonists is to be found in discussions of the treaty making between the English and the "Amerindian"

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[35] Decore, Carney and Urion (1981) discuss some of the problems arisng in school social studies curriculum materials because of such stereotypes.

(Cumming and Mickenberg 1972 and Fisher 1976:459). During the French colonial period it was assumed that the "Indian" would be easily Frenchified using religious education (Jaenen, 1973).

Besides these perceptions of the "Indian", there has also been the view that the "Indian" should not be segregated and that there should be no special status accorded. The Department of Indian Affairs' White Paper on Indian Policy (1969) and Jenness' (1946) paper on ending "Canada's Indian Problem" are examples. Both views, complete segregation or complete assimilation, could be said to be commonly held.

5.2.2.3 Mobility of Identification

In Category A it is of note that when "Natives" are investigated they are placed in context. It is in this context that the observer discusses the influences from some other community on certain characteristics. Since only certain characteristics are affected by this specific interaction, what is implied is that in other contexts another label would apply. The individual is, thus, allowed mobility of identification. He/she is not chained to a "Native" identification in all circumstances.

Categories B and C, on the other hand, contain studies which tend not to discriminate between characteristics or contexts. It appears that any characteristics the

investigator wishes to investigate are assumed to be those of "Natives." Here the individual is given no mobility of identification. He/she is imprisoned within his/her 'Nativeness' no matter what.

5.3 Conclusion

5.3.1 The Use of Criteria for Ascribing Ethnic Label

What has been discussed are three ways in which the label "Indian" may be given meaning. Each suggests that the label is appropriately used in different circumstances. The first, Category A, suggested that the colonial context in which two communities interacted in particular ways was the most appropriate context for the use of the label. There were problems with the studies reviewed since they left out a thorough discussion of what that context meant to the interactions between the two interactants. However, these two studies, of the twenty reviewed, indicated that using the criteria developed from the meta-theory of observation provided by the theory of Autopoietic Systems is an aid for the investigator who finds problematic the initial ascription of an ethnic label for the purpose of identifying a particular population.

Category B, outlined above, showed that certain authors, although not successful, attempted to give explicit meaning to the label "Native." The failure resulted because

the context in which the label was to be understood as applying was poorly explicated and confused. As a result the category "Native" became a reified category. It was assumed by the authors that individuals identified as "Native" could be considered "Native" in all circumstances and that any characteristics they exhibited were unique to "Natives." I suggest that if they had had the criteria developed in Chapter Four they would have conducted completely different studies, asking different questions and arriving at different conclusions.

In the studies reviewed in Category C, the third type of investigation of "Natives," there was no attempt to develop an understanding of the circumstances in which the label applied.

I cannot suggest that the authors of the majority of studies have intentionally given inappropriate meaning to the label "Native." However, I do suggest that the authors of the studies representing Category A have intentionally thought about the use of the label and have intentionally designed their investigations around the initial meaning they applied to the term "Native." They have been aware of the political consequences of their work by refusing to be influenced by stereotypical images of "Indians" and by refusing to allow these to affect the course of their investigations. They have been very much aware of their roles as observer in supporting certain images of "Indians."

5.3.2 The Observer's Values

In Chapter Four it was noted that the observer's values and intentions are present when he/she undertakes to divide the social world. It is also the case that such decisions have a community of supporters. Thus I was able to identify three Categories into which the reviewed studies were placed.

These collectively held views also have certain values and consequences attached. One of the major ones is that the term "Native" is given a particular meaning. In Categories B and C this is neither positive nor unique.

What becomes apparent is that the criteria developed in the previous chapter, if adhered to, would aid social science investigators avoid stereotypical images of the descriptor "Native." These stereotypes either deliver the "Native" to a subservient, backward, segregated and inconsequential position within Canadian society or they deny "Natives" any special place assuming that the term should not be allowed unique meaning. The criteria, if used, also enable the author to express his/her values overtly. Thus, he/she provides the reader with an indication of the basis upon which the investigation rests.

The political consequences become obvious. "Natives" who are perceived as backward and different are treated as such and are seen to be anomolies within the "normal" course of things, or they are denied special status and the benefits which should accrue.

For academics it becomes a balancing act: how to use a label appropriately and discriminatingly. Academics can develop a unique understanding of what it means to be "Native" in Canada. And investigations can be based on that understanding. Perhaps at the present one context within which to understand the term "Native" is that of "internal colonialism."

5.3.3 Summary

I must emphasise that the theory of Autopoietic Systems as used here is in no way intended to suggest that social systems are autopoietic. What is suggested is that the meta-theory of observation which may be derived from the theory itself can be used by social scientists who demand less ambiguous meanings in their investigations than those provided by commonsense notions. To effect such thoroughness, Varela (1979:12) implies that it is important to keep a record of procedures.

> "...to maintain a clear record of what pertains to each domain is an important methodological tool, which we use extensively. It seems an almost trivial kind of logical bookkeeping yet it is too often violated in usage."

The theory of Autopoietic Systems as discussed here can be used as an aid to this sort of clarity by providing for a less ambiguous understanding of how social scientists derive

their categories and of the meanings underlying them.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Ethnic Studies and Ethnic Labelling

Ethnic studies at present is a confused field. There are a number of differing approaches, all of which admit to problems, for providing an understanding of the identity and identification of various ethnic groupings. In attempting to provide meaning for the categories used, social scientists have developed techniques which are designed to give them insights into what various ethnics might do in certain situations. There appear to be basically three such techniques. One deriving from each of the Social Facts paradigm, the General Systems model, and the Social Definition paradigm.

The first, deriving from a social factist orientation, is that an investigator designs a study and performs the investigation with little help from the subjects themselves. They have been selected by various indicia and are assumed to represent the group to which they are ascribed. The second, deriving from the General Systems orientation, is not that much different except that interaction between various ethnic groups is seen to be an important factor in bringing to the fore certain characteristics unique to the situation and representative of the ethnic group under investigation. The third, deriving from social definitionist notions, demands that the individuals who are identified as

belonging to a certain ethnic group be involved, with the investigator, in the discovery of what it is that is unique to that group. Their typifications are the basis of the social scientists' typifications. What is usually investigated is the effects of the interactions of individuals, be it with members of another ethnic group and/or with members of their own group, on the behavior of those individuals.

It is evident that in none of these techniques has there been any question that the individuals represented the categories to which they were assigned. However, on the theoretical level this has been recognized as problematic. There has been the suggestion that the use of ethnic labels is context bound, that individuals, therefore, must be allowed mobility of identity, and that the indiscriminate application of such labels is problematic.

What has been suggested in this thesis is that part of the problem has been a lack of thorough address to the role of the observer in the creation of the categories and divisions he/she uses in the first place. Although social definitionists have addressed the role of the investigator in social science studies by discussing objectivity and by being aware of the important influences of values in social science (and this was an improvement over the social factist orientation which took objectivity for granted), there was little awareness of the social scientists place in conceiving of and in giving meaning to the categories he/she

used. Such a discussion is the focus of the theory of Autopoietic Systems.

The theory is a very recent development in the biological sciences. Although it has been directed mainly at biology, it discusses the biological basis of human cognition. In doing so it develops a meta-theory of observation which I suggest might be useful as a heuristic device aiding the social scientist in coming to terms with the current problems evident in ethnic studies, i.e., formulating a method for the unambiguous ascription of ethnic identification.

It was with the help of the meta-theory of observation that I developed, in Chapter Four, criteria which, if followed, might prove useful in aiding social scientists ascribe ethnic identification in appropriate context and investigate characteristics relevant to that identification.

Chapter five presented a test of the use of the criteria by discussing social science ascription of the label "Indian." It was illustrated there that the label is usually taken for granted. That is, in many of the studies reviewed the "Native" identity of individuals was assumed self-evident; they were identified as "Natives," in one way or another, and the assumption was that since they belonged to a particular group they naturally would act like "Natives" in most every situation. This is a Social Facts view. Even though social definitionist techniques may be used within the body of a study, they are not used to inform

the observer's ascription of ethnic label.

The investigation and discussion of the previous chapter takes Barth's (1969) notions of interaction further and indicates how ethnic identification may be accomplished. Barth's notions were lacking because they were of little use when it came to the criteria for identification. However, when the conceptual effort is concentrated on the observer's role in science then notions of interaction becomes important for the development of criteria of identification.

The criteria I suggested for the ascribing of ethnic label were the following:

1. Any individual or group to whom an ethnic label is to be applied must be discussed in a particular context. That discussion holds the key to the meaning of the descriptor used.

   By context I mean that the individual or collectivity, whichever is being investigated, must be presented as interacting with some other. It is the discussion of this interaction which creates boundaries between the two. It is this boundary and the interaction across it which assists with the understanding of the meaning of the label used. The investigator must discuss the interaction as a unique system in itself. The example in Chapter Five, discussing "Native" as test case, suggested that the colonial relationship was an appropriate context in which to investigate "Natives." That is, given the studies reviewed, the colonial

context was the most appropriate one. Other contexts, not discussed here, could also be appropriate to the use of the term "Native." That is a unique system of interaction which gives meaning to the label "Native."

2. Given such identification of context, the investigator will be able to hypothesize certain characteristics (of the group observed) which would be affected as a result of interaction. Verification (or lack of it) of the validity of the context developed will depend on whether the characteristics singled out for study are affected during the interaction. The interaction must not be perceived in mechanistic terms. There is mutual influence and this should be discussed. Also the outcomes observed in the group being investigated must be seen to be responses formulated from within.
3. It is the responsibility of the observer, as a participant in the process of dividing the world, to report the context used. As this is done the socio-political nature of the context may well become apparent. The world is not necessarily divided as the observer would have us believe; such discussion, therefore, informs the reader about the author's assumptions and values regarding that which is being investigated and the social consequences of the categories derived.

Since the world requires categorization to understand it and understanding to categorize it, and

since the observer is the responsible agent, he/she must be open and as forthcoming as possible in his/her report of the investigation.

These criteria take into account a number of different concerns. These are:

a. the role of the observer in ethnic identification. It is the academic's place to take responsibility for the label used to identify a group or individual. He/she cannot let the individuals involved create his/her categories for him/her nor can he/she create identities arbitrarily.

b. the mobility of the individual from one identity to another. This mobility holds for the group as well.

c. the concern that an individual who does not interact with a particular group may still be seen as being part of it.

Perhaps the most important of these is the undertanding of the role of the academic in ethnic studies. Observers while taking responsibility for dividing the social world hold the key to an understanding of that world. They are not presenting and merely recording "social facts." What they are doing is detailing a cognitive activity and by doing so must provide meaning for the categories derived. To develop appropriate meaning the social scientist has to present interacting opposites which mutually determine each other's position. Ellul (1980:51) reinforces this notion when he states,

> "The sociologists, like the historians, of the modern schools no longer accept the causal in sociology or history. It is impossible to determine a direct and unequivocal causality. Phenomenon determine each other mutually... ."

Besides this notion of reciprocal interaction, the relationship must be given further meaning and definition by understanding the links between the two opposites. By discussing the interrelationship as a single system the opposites become intelligible (Ibid:54-55).

This means that the social scientist takes the social definitionist notion of negotiated meaning and applies it to him/herself. He/she, then, may discuss "social facts" understanding that they are maleable and mobile not static and fixed. This conceptual mixing of the Social Facts and Social Definition Paradigms has been called for by many social theorists (e.g. Ellul, 1980; Frank, 1979; and Habermas, 1974 to name but a few.).

6.2 The Role of the Academic in Ethnic Identification

Since I used the ascription of "Native" identity as a test case for notions derived from the theory of Autopoietic Systems, I will now concentrate on a discussion of the role of the observer in such ethnic studies. As has been indicated by that theory, the observer plays a dramatic role in developing and supporting the conceptual divisions

evident in the social world. The question which might be asked is this: what does that mean in terms of the label "Native"?

6.2.1 Common Meanings

Knowledge is negotiated. Particular groups of individuals interact to negotiate their understanding of the world. The categories developed in the previous chapter suggest that social scientists do not form a homogeneous group when it comes to the meanings they give to the words they used when dividing the world. The point of view expressed in most of the studies investigated (in Categories B and C) leads to the impression that the "Native" must be backward and disadvantaged, separate from the rest of society. Another view is that the "Native" lacks any special position or place and must be denied a unique position. In this case the "Native" is seen as just another of the many diverse but basically inconsequential groups within society.

It is Category A, discussed in Chapter Five, that appropriately places "Natives" within a context unique within the society (e.g. the colonial context).

It is evident that various groups of academics apply particular meanings to the words they use and these meanings have, what Ellul (1980) calls, "doctrinal" interests attached. He discusses these in terms of the social sciences, while Varela (1979), referring to the physical sciences, discusses such common ways of viewing the world as

having considerable socio-economic consequences. It is the values, and interests within knowledge and the socio-political consequences of the knowldege generated, with these interests and values at its base, which is the focus here.

6.2.2 Political Consequences

As discussed in the theory of Autopoietic Systems there are solid biological reasons for the cognitive positions we, as human beings, take. This is not a reductionist point of view. What it says is that social scientists, in communities, develop social constructions of reality which support their positions. There are dramatic socio-political consequences attendant to the positions each community develops. Those who support the mechanistic General Systems and Social Facts notions, support the domination of the individual by the collectivity. As a result a supposedly "deviant" population such as "Natives" are seen to promote certain social consequences themselves since they have not responded to the input of administrative information (e.g. from the Department of Indian Affairs) which would allow them to join as equal members of the society. In some instances it is assumed that such an input of information has worked and the "Native" has become acculturated. In this latter case this means that the "Native" has no need of special recognition within Canadian society. The social consequences of these notions are that the "Native" is

forced into the position of being administratively dominated and is perceived as a stranger in his/her own land. It is also a consequence that "Natives" are viewed as inconsequential in the development of society.

On the other hand, the theory of Autopoietic Systems moves inside these notions and exposes their conclusions. This is accomplished because of the emphasis on the role of the individual. It is shown that social structures are mental constructs and cannot have goals to which the individual is subordinated. The individual develops his/her own responses and views while being influenced by the community with which he/she interacts. The results are that individuals and the communities within which they live, interact and develop certain social consequences together. In the case of the "Native" the social consequences are an imbalance in power influenced by the notions of the social factists.

Holzner (1968:20) states that "Knowledge can only mean the mapping of experienced reality by some observer... (and that there is)... no such thing as the direct and 'true' apprehension of 'reality' itself." He goes on to suggest that there are rules by which the observer plots a "permissible map." The scientific community to which he belongs helps provide such constraints. Holzner calls such a community an "epistemic community." One such community within society is that which generates specialized knowledge. His term for this group is the "knowledge

oriented work community." The academic community is one of these and as such they are:

> "major forces in the social constructions and elaborations of reality. Where knowledge itself becomes the focus, rather than the mere tool of work, we are dealing with knowledge oriented work communities. (These comprise) persons who face the same problems while at work, who develop in communicating with each other a more or less specialized language, and who are linked with each other and society at large through sometimes very stable institutionalized channels." (Ibid:126)

While referring to these "institutionalized channels", Urion (1978) discusses the social scientist as "broker" between the "Native" community and the government which administers it. He suggests that in many instances such knowledge as is generated by academics may be itself an agent of "internal colonialism."[36]

This does not suggest that the academic is the only source of information for the bureaucracy which administers "Natives". He/she does not supply the only source of knowledge which influences and sustains colonial domination. Nevertheless academics play a role as the generators and

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[36] For a thorough discussion and impression of the indicators of internal colonialism see: Fisher (1976, 1981); Watkins (1977); Adams (1969); and Urion (1978:213) who discusses such a set of colonial relations "as explanatory of a peculiar set of social relations", i.e., internal colonialism is unique to the "Native" population.

presevers of knowledge and may be an integral part of the colonial system but by no means the only part. The academic for the most part performs investigations within the educational system and this in one arena in which images of "Natives" are generated and passed on. Often the academy supports the colonial relationship but it is possible for it to help understand the colonial process, as has been shown in the studies reviewed in Chapter Five.

When images like those presented in Categories B and C are implied (e.g. pre-modern, traditional, easily moulded) and when institutions such as education use these notions as guides, then, it becomes apparent that social science is an agent which can influence interactions between two communities. They are apparently agents in the development of a great imbalance of power. Manuel and Posluns (1974:59) discuss such negative images; they call them "myths" and point to the dramatic effect they have had on the colonial relationship.[3']

Gouldner makes two important points regarding such images and assumptions. First, he states that "they provide foci for feelings, affective states, and sentiments" (1971:37). Obviously then, there are certain negative emotions added to these images of the "Native." He adds to

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[3'] While Iverson (1978) and Fisher (1981) write about education and colonialism, Manuel and Posluns (1974) discuss internal colonialism and its relation to many other institutions. But they do say that "nothing else contributed so much to the destruction of the Indian nation as the school system..." (1974:65).

this

> "Every social theory has both political and personal relevance, which, according to the technical canons of social theory, it is not supposed to have." (Ibid:40)

Because social science is not seen to play a part in creating these images and effects, a blind spot has been created in ethnic studies which hinders the perception of the "Native" community as an equal within society. Added to this is an emotional prejudice. Prejudice produces both the perception of more than is seen and selective noticing, according to Harris (1979:25). Academics can, thus, add to the weight of colonialism or they can recognize it and attempt to understand it.

One means has been suggested in this thesis. The criteria developed for ethnic identification help the social scientist understand the colonial relationship and develop investigations which (a) view the term "Native" as having special meaning within Canadian society, and (b) that individuals and groups may be labelled as "Native" only in a certain context.

It is the awareness of these points which enables academics to avoid supporting the colonial domination or the extinction of the "Native" while supporting a call for a special place within Canadian society.

6.2.3 How Social Science may be perceived as legitimate

Phillips (1974:60) suggests that social scientists have not really taken into account the values lying beneath the knowledge that has been generated by them.

> "...sociologists, I believe, by generally neglecting questions regarding their status as knowers and the status of their knowledge, have effectively cut themselves off from a concern with this issue of legitimate authority."

The problem may be put this way. If sociologists have biases which influence their knowledge, how can it be regarded as authoritative? The social generation of knowledge which entails values and self interest raises problems of authority.

Varela and Maturana have pointed to the fact that scientific knowledge is moulded by an "observer-community." Thus, given the studies reviewed in the last chapter, the status, legitimacy and authority of the knowledge generated by them may well be questioned.[38] Each category generated in the last chapter implies some sort of knowledge of what it means to be "Native." Each places a particular value on the term. These definitions create certain images of the individuals and groups so identified. Most often the images are inappropriate. The question has been raised: Can

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[38] Harris (1979:17) lends support here when he states: "A fact - a knowledge statement is not a neutral description of what "is", but rather something that has been established by theory and methodology together, and which is also vulnerable to the effects of contingencies and motives."

specialized knowledge be legitimate, given that it is not value-free? Add to that in the context of ethnic studies of "Native" people: Can it avoid being an agent of the colonial relationship?

Kuhn has stated that "People do not see stimuli: our knowldege of them is highly theoretical and abstract" (1971:192). As a result in studies of "Native" people where the knowledge generated is assumed to be value free and a direct representation of the social world, as has been discussed, the consequences can be dramatic. It is therefore necessary for the social scientist to incorporate in his/her study a discussion of how he/she comes to define the descriptors used. This will identify the assumptions behind their use. Freeman (1977: abstract) states that to maintain its credibility, applied anthropology, and I will add social science in general, "will depend...on the efforts of anthropologists toward making their value biases and research documentation public." Gouldner reinforces the notion when he states

> "unless (the theorist) delivers his domain assumptions from the dim realm of subsidiary awareness into the clearer realm of focal awareness, where they can be held firmly in view, they can never be brought before the bar of reason or submitted to the test of evidence." (1971:35)

By making his/her assumptions, meanings, and definitions overt, the social scientist allows the reader of

his/her material to decide upon its validity him/herself. It will be apparent whether those assumptions, definitions, and meanings are commonsense, everyday notions which the majority of the population hold or whether they can be said to be unambiguous attempts to discover the workings of the social world which lie beneath our everyday perceptions.

I have shown that many social scientists use what could be said to be mundane notions about what it means to be a "Native" person in Canada. Those mundane notions are aids to discrimination. However, there were investigators who took the time to develop contextualized meanings for the label "Native." It was this context which demanded of the social scientist discrete use of the ethnic label. Indiscriminate use of the label "Native" resulted in images of the "Native" which supported colonialism.

It was the purpose of this study to identify criteria which would aid the social scientist in his/her attempt to come to terms with the ascription of ethnicity. It was shown that the social scientist must take responsibility for his/her categorization; he/she must develop a context within which the ethnic descriptor can be given appropriate meaning.

This sort of thoroughness will make his/her attitudes, impressions meanings, etc., his/her values in general, explicit. Not only is it important for social scientists to lay bare their basic assumptions - something all try to do - but also there must be rigorous development of criteria for

affixing ethnic labels. These criteria themselves must be based on the understanding that observers do not perceive reality directly but that they construct a reality which needs explication and testing. Only when such criteria are adhered to can the knowledge generated in studies about "Natives" or other ethnic groups be said to be legitimately applied to those ethnics.

6.3 Conclusion

The knowledge basis on which "Native" ethnic studies are made is shown to be diverse. The meaning of the term "Native" for the social scientists involved is varied and in most cases I found to be inappropriate, creating images of the "Native" which supported their colonized position. The use of the knowledge generated by social scientists as a support of colonialism is a result of the lack of appropriate criteria for the development of an understanding of the ethnic label used. When such criteria are not used, academics in their investigations fall prey to commonsense notions of what it means to be "Native" and these notions influenced their investigations. The conclusions drawn by these investigations, although purported to be unique to "Natives", cannot be said to be so. With the application of appropriate criteria for ethnic identification different sorts of questions are asked of the subjects being investigated and completely new understandings of the

position of "Natives" within society is developed.

This thesis, using the theory of Autopoietic Systems, identified criteria which if followed should provide the investigator with a means of affixing ethnicity appropriately, whether it be of "Native" people or some other ethnic group. If these steps are followed, his/her assumptions about what it means to be identified as belonging to a particular ethnic group will also become meaningful and clear. That is, they will become meaningful and clear to the reader and to the author of a social science investigation which purports to study a particular group of people.

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Appendix A

Academic studies selected from the following bibliographies:

1. Abstracts on Criminology and Penology. v10 to v21, 1970 to 1981.
2. The bibliography in Canadian Ethnic Research and Multiculturalism, by N. Buchignani. In Journal of Canadian Studies, 17(1), 16-34, 1982.
3. Native Education in Canada and the United States: a Bibliography by I.R. Brooks. Calgary: The Office of Educational Development. Indian Students University Program Services. Universtiy of Calgary. 1976.
4. Social Science Citation Index. 1970 to 1981.
5. Sociological Abstracts.v18 to v29, 1970 to 1981. (volumes 27 and 28 were missing at the time of the search)

Appendix B

The number of reviewed articles by year of publication.

1970 - 3

1971 - 3

1972 - 2

1973 - 1

1974 - 2

1975 - 3

1976 - 2

1977 - 1

1978 - 2

1979 - 0

1980 - 0

1981 - 1

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total 20

Journals represented in the reviews.

Alberta Journal of Educational Research

Anthropologica

Canadian Ethnic Studies

Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science

Canadian Journal of Criminology

Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology

Child Development

Comparative Political Studies

Developmental Psychology

The Elementary School Journal

Journalism Quarterly

McGill Journal of Education

Northian

Urban Anthropology

Appendix C

#1

"Modernization and Fertility: the case of the James Bay Indians"

by A. Romaniuk

in Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology,

11 (4),344-359, 1974.

> The theory that modernization at its initial stages may result in an increase in fertility through the relaxation of restrictive customs governing procreative behaviors of pre-modern societies has often been postulated but little empirical evidence has been provided to support it. (p344)

With this introduction the study continues an examination of the fertility of married women living in the James Bay area in the communities of Moosonee, Moose Factory, Fort Albany, Attawapiskat, Fort Rupert and Fort George. They are all indentified as 'Indian women'

The justification for combining the women in these towns together in one sample is given in a previous publication (Piche and Romaniuk 1972:225).

> ...la population enquétée offre un tres forte homogenéité, surtout du point de vue demographique il s'agit d'Indiens vivant presque tous dans des memes conditions exologique, économiques et sociales.

Thus, they hint at the overall context in which Canadian 'Indians' live. It is outside the dominant society. There is the assumption that 'Indians' and the other half of the population are different because of the way they conduct

their lives and because of the environment in which they live. The suggestion is that two communities may be identified: the 'modern' and the 'premodern'. However, the lack of interaction between the two is quite explicitly discussed.

> They still live in relative isolation from the mainstream of Canadian life, but exposure to modernization, especially with regard to education and medical progress, has been increasingly felt since the Second World War. (p346)

The results suggested that younger women tended to have shorter birth intervals. The reasons were hypothesized to be the increased contact with the 'modern': better medical care, a less nomadic life, and unspecified relaxation of 'fertility restrictive customs which are prevalent in many traditional societies' (p357).

Acculturation is assumed. Also these premodern societies are seen to progress in steps - generations are seen to be different and opposed to each other, static in time.

> Changing along with the times, they went from an essentially nomadic way of life to a settled society. Their traditional means of subsistence were replaced by a scheme of government relief, together with some additional income from a few wage-earning opportunities available in the region. (p346)

In general the study does not elucidate the processual nature of change.

In summary, the authors have not identified this community as one which exists within the context of another society. It is not conceptually opposed to some other. No

coupling is discussed. Thus, an appropriate identity is not presented.

At the level of the individual there is no discussion of the interaction of the individual with some 'other'. It is to be assumed that these women are 'Indian' in all contexts. And any characteristics they exhibit must be those of 'Indians'. They are not considered individuals whose identity for this study might change given various curcumstances.

The authors conclude that the results of this study might "eventually be extended to the native population of Canada in general" (p358). Implicit is the assumption that these changes in fertility patterns are characteristic of 'Indians', and that the culture of the 'Indian' is pervasive. However, since the context within which the term 'Indian' applies is not clear, it seems that one can conclude that the results may not necessarily be applied to 'Indians'.

#2

"Canadian Indian Migrants and Impression Management of Ethnic Status"

by T. Denton

in Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology,

12 (1) 65-71, 1975.

> Canadian Indian migrants feel that the social category 'Indian' is a discrediting one among whites. Accordingly migrants act to control their image of Indian self during interaction with whites. (p65)

The study goes on to discuss strategies for managing identity impressions and relates these strategies to friendship networks. It is a study of 'Indians' from the inside. A study of 'Indian/White' interaction and its effect on the 'Indian'.

The subjects were 13 male migrants from one Indian reserve. Their ages and job status were mentioned. In identifying these subjects Denton suggests that within Canadian society, as a whole, Indians are labelled. The relations in which they partake are a microcosm of the relations which apply at more macro levels of interaction.

> The simple act of attributing an ethnic label dispatches Indians to an interactional fate wherein a ready-made self of dubious social esteem awaits even the most reluctant actor. (p70)

He goes on to study the social organisational patterns of migrants and how they manage their identities. While investigating these characteristics he discusses the

influences of another - the white community on these characteristics. Thus, he discusses the individual's behavior as representative of a larger social context, i.e., 'Indian'/'White' relationships. For example, one group of migrants is discussed this way:

> ...the young migrants who move away from the village as part of the growing up process tend to avoid whites, to surround themselves with Indians as close friends, and to present favorable Indian stereotypes when among white acquaintances. (p70)

As part of the identification of the individual a thorough discription of each individual is given including age and job status.

The author assumes that (at the macro level) the interacting communities partake in certain relations which hold true for the interactions in which the idividuals find themselves. Denton does discuss individuals in context assuming the context is a microcosm of the macro stigmatizing relationship. He indicates the different sorts of identities the individuals present in these situations. For example,

> One type of identity switching involves denying that the imputed identity is relevant in the context of the situation...'I came here for a job as a car mechanic not just as an Indian'. (p67)

Another example is informative of the investigator's assumption that individual public statements of identity are affected by a context in which the individual is stigmatized.

> White ancestry, even illegitimacy, may be mentioned in conversation in order to claim a non-indian identity. (p67)

The major assumption appears to be that 'Indians' are 'Indians' always and it is because they are 'Indians' in all circumstance when interacting with whites that they perform tricks to hide that identity. The author does not suggest that in a particular context individuals may not feel the full weight of the identity 'Indian'. Nor does he suggest that the descriptor, from the observer's point of view, may not be appropriate at times.

The role the investigator finds himself filling is one which demands that he/she identify 'Indian' characteristics resulting from the individuals' stigmatized position in life. He has characterized the 'Indian' as labelled and as feeling this label and the weight of it always. The subjects are imprisoned within an identity. There appears to be no room for the mobility of individual identification.

One of the Denton's most important assumptions is that the 'Indian' is imposed upon: that his/her responses are caused by the interaction scene and it is information flowing across the 'Indian-White' boundary which causes particular responses. The reflexive nature of the individual's responses is ignored.

#3

"University Success for Canadian Indians"

by L. S. Walker

in The Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science,

9 (2), 169-175, 1977.

> This study evaluates the effectiveness of the CORE educational model in aiding students to adjust to and succeed in the university environment. (p169)

Walker goes on to discuss how the use of the educational strategies in the CORE Program (e.g. teaching reading, writing and research skills) in the teaching of 21 'Status Indians' developed more successful students when compared to 'Indian' students who had not taken the program.

The population studied was identified as 'Status Indians' who were over 21 years of age. There is no discussion of the national or social context in which the classification has developed.

There is no discussion of two interrelating communities, although I suppose the author would agree that what is implied is the interaction of two communities. The CORE program is an element of the dominant society which is being used to aid the 'underpriveleged' to succeed at university. The boundary between the two interacting communities is assumed to be self-evident. It is also assumed that the 'Indian' may be considered 'Indian' in all situations. Thus, it is also assumed that the characteristics of these individuals are those of 'Indians'.

It could be said that once the subjects of this study were identified as 'Status Indians', i.e. a legal indicator was applied to them, they were unquestionably 'Indian' for the purposes of this study.

An acculturative view is implicit. All these 'Indians' need is a little extra stimulation and they will succeed in the dominant society. Given the proper input, out will come an 'Indian' with "the appropriate study skills...in order to achieve". Two groups of 'Status Indians' are compared. One received special help, the other did not. Those who received the help were found to be more successful at university. The author implies that although both groups came from similarly 'disadvantaged' backgrounds (in fact, it appears that the author views all 'Status Indians' as having the same background), that group which is influenced more by the dominant society picks up the traits of that society and succeeds at living within it.

Most of the author's impressions of what it means to be 'Indian' are rather covert. What is obvious is that this study investigates individual traits and goes on to suggest that these must be the traits characteristic of 'Indians'. However, without identifying a context which would give an understanding of the types of situations in which the term may be applied, the author does not make a convincing argument that the results of the investigation apply to 'Indians'. Nor am I convinced that the descriptor is appropriately applied to the individuals under observation.

The author has apparently confused the 'indicia' of identification for 'criteria' which would aid identification.

#4

"The Economic Adjustment of Indians in Winnipeg, Canada"

by J. N. Kerri

in Urban Anthropology

5 (4), 351-365, 1976.

> This paper deals mainly with the economic adjustment of Canadian Indian urban migrants in the prairie city of Winnipeg. An analytic distinction is made between 'economic' and other 'social' aspects of adjustment. (p351)

The subjects for the study were 'Metis' and 'Indians' chosen at random from a directory. 67 individuals were interviewed to collect data on their economic histories and other 'formal' characteristics such as number of dependents, and their own perceptions of their social networks.

There is a discussion of the effects of the larger social context within which these individuals find themselves in their economic situations.

> The economic problem results mainly from the social arrangements of the industrial society into which the Indian population and their ancestors were unwillingly dragged by the Euro-Canadian and Euro-American exploitation of their land. (p364)

The result suggested is that 'Indians' live on economically poor reserves and are to be viewed as 'disadvantaged'. Take this statement for example.

> ...while in the city he is plagued by the consequences of the inadequacies resulting from his disadvantaged preurban background, one that has not prepared him. (p364)

In this way context is developed. However, it is a context which is assumed to apply to the individuals investigated in all situations. Individual contexts are not discussed. The individual is not mentioned as interacting with some 'other.' It is the lack of such a discussion which suggests that the descriptor applied may not be appropriate. The characteristics discussed as those of 'Indian Migrants' are not convincingly presented as characteristics of 'Indian Migrants'.

An acculturative model is applied suggesting that if more financial influence were to be applied to the reserves the occupants would have a more urban-like background and would not begin urban life as 'disadvantaged'. Perhaps one of the most important assumptions apparent in this study is that which suggests that the 'Indian' and the 'urban' societies are separate and non-interacting. The 'Indian' is a deprived environment on the fringes of society; one which needs to be brought into the modern world.

#5

"Some Effects of Frontier Television on a Canadian Eskimo Community"

by G. O. Coldevin

in Journalism Quarterly,

53 (1), 34-39, 1976.

> C.B.C. Frontier Coverage Package had little effect on the information levels of non-English speaking Eskimos, but did affect socio-economic aspirations. (p34)

This is a summary of the results of the investigation. Two 'Eskimo' communities were identified for study: Frobisher Bay and Fort Chimo. Fort Chimo was used as a control

> since it, like Forbisher Bay, is predominantly Eskimo but has limited access to direct outside information through the C.B.C. shortwave radio service. (p34)

The subjects of the investigation were the heads of households. They varied in age and in occupation. It is interesting that none of these variables seems to affect the generalization of the results to all 'Eskimos' in these areas.

There is no discussion of the overall Canadian context within which the term 'Eskimo' may be given meaning. There is no direct mention made of the interactions between the 'Eskimo' and the society of "main stream Canada", although this is, of course, implied. The following is illustrative.

> After slightly more than one year, 'partial television' has not had a major effect in terms of providing a 'window on the nation' and participation in the main stream of southern information and public affairs on the remote Eskimo community under study. (p39)

What is suggested is that if the language of the television viewers had been that used in the programs they watched there would have been changes in information levels. In saying this the author takes an acculturative stance regarding what he assumes the 'Eskimo' to be.

The interactions between the two Eskimo communities is discussed as being one way. Besides these assumptions, there is also the assumption that the two communities compared are totally separate and non-intersecting. The impression is that these are two static societies one of which happens to be a little closer to 'main steam' culture and, as a result, perhaps a little different. It seems, then, that the author views these societies as outside Canada and as backward.

There is no development of context within which the term 'Eskimo' may be given meaning. This applies at both the individual and community levels. The result is that the descriptor given to the subjects of the study has not been given any justification for use. They might as easily have been identified as 'Northerners'. Also the characteristics of these individuals cannot be assumed to be those of 'Eskimos'.

The investigator has assumed that the identity of the individuals is self-evident. He has also assumed that the traits of the group 'Eskimo' are imposed upon the

individuals and should be apparent at all times. This leads to an investigation which studies only certain individuals and assumes that the traits of these select individuals are the traits of all 'Eskimos'.

The individuals studied are frozen in time and their identities are equally fixed and immobile.

#6

"Colonial Transfer: Abandonment or Disguised Domination? A Canadian Indian Reserve Case"

By G. E. Mortimer

in Anthropologica,

17 (2), 187-203, 1975.

The author begins this study by stating,

> I propose to analyze the case of a Canadian Ojibwa Indian Band in which some of the policies of governments, both federal and provincial, created fragmentation, internal conflict and loss of resources. These effects ran directly counter to the increased economic and political power which governments were outwardly trying to convey. In fact, some government policies did achieve partial success, but negative and conflict-creating policies came close to cancelling out all that had been achieved. (p187)

The context in which the 'Indian' band is discussed is that of internal colonialism. The relations within that context are between the band and some government department. There is, thus, the identification of two opposed communities which interact and mutually influence each other.

Mortimer continues the study by discussing the band only - its conflict resolving processes, among others. He justifies his selection of the band rather than, say, individuals, by stating, "Canadian Indians are a legally defined ethnic population category" (p188) of which Bands are an identifiable unit. The interactions between the Band and government are indicative of the more macro relations

which pertain between 'Indians' and 'non-Indians' in general.

He continues the investigation by discussing the history of the Band, its interactions with a changing social environment, and its ability to take on new economic roles as required. He says,

> It stands now as an enlarged and altered version of its former self, having lost most elements of its original Ojibwa Indian identity." (191-192)

Specifically, regarding the influence of government on the Band's organization, he suggests that certain transfers of authority created conflict within the Band. The various factions became less cohesive. the impression which is left is that the Band underwent certain changes as a result of its interactions with government. There is no acculturative assumption held. What the author implies is that the Band formulated its own responses to external influences.

In conclusion, there is presented a context within which the descriptor 'Indian' may be understood. Such a context provides a measure of predictability about what characteristics may be influenced by certain interactions. Thus, the characteristics discussed and their historical change gain credence as characteristics specific to 'Indian' Bands.

The author does not discuss the effects of the colonial relationship on the individuals in the Band. He discusses the Band within that context. Implied is mobility of identity for both the individual and the Band since, I

assume, a discussion of different contexts would necessitate the ascription of different descriptors.

By discussing the history of the community, Mortimer presents a picture of a group which became identified through three phases of colonial interaction as 'Indian'. What has been identified has been clearly done within a particular context and the ascribed identity is applied in that context only. At the same time, the author gives a clear impression that the Band is to be understood as going through changes in a processual manner, i.e., it is not to be thought of as having a fixed culture or static traits, changes in which are caused by it being forced into main stream Canadian life. He views the Band as being an integral part of Canadian social life not an unwanted and non-interacting appendage.

#7

"Verbal Regulation of Behavior and I.Q. in Canadian Indian and White Children"

by J. Schubert and A.J. Cropley

in Developmental Psychology, 7 (3), 295-301, 1972.

The abstract for this study is particularly informative.

> Four groups of Canadian school children of varying social and ethnic backgrounds were trained in the use of strategies for solving Similarities and Block Design problems from the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, and were given a test of verbal regulation of behavior. There was a significant relationship between I.Q. and ethnic background, with differences in I.Q. related to the amount of contact with the white, urban culture. (p295)

The groups of children were from

1. a remote Indian reserve where "the majority of the population lived by fishing and trapping" (p297),
2. a reserve near Regina which had more contact with urban white white culture,
3. a rural area near Regina,
4. urban children in Regina.

No overall Canadian social context which would give meaning to the ascribed identity is discussed. Two communities are compared but their interactions are not discussed as being mutually influencing. The influences are one-way. Exposure to urban culture causes changes in certain characteristics of the individuals. Implicit is an acculturative model: the more contact the 'Indian' has with the urban society the more he/she will change for the better.

Since no context is developed for the understanding of the descriptor which is applied to the children, it is difficult to say that the characteristics identified are those of 'Indians' and 'Whites'. What is assumed here is that those identified as 'Indian' and 'White' are automatically members of some group which imposes certain traits upon the members. The categories 'Indian' and 'White' are assumed to be naturally occurring groups which cannot be identified otherwise.

There is meaning applied to the term 'Indian'. To be 'Indian' means that the individual is living in various stages of traditional culture. Each stage varying in its primitiveness depending on proximity to urban culture. The more traditional the culture the lower the I.Q. of the individual members. The authors rationalize this view by stating,

> The intellectual development of Indian children from the far north is adequate in terms of their traditional way of life and is only inadequate in terms of the requirements of highly technological society. (p301)

Of note is the four way comparison of characteristics. It gives a very static impression of the characteristics studied. The result is that change within societies is itself given a disjointed character.

In sum, the impression presented is that 'Indian' societies are static, traditional, easily moulded when the opportunity arises. The individuals identified as members of this particualr ethnic group are assumed to be similar. They

are, simply, stereotyped. The descriptor applied to the individuals and groups being investigated is seen to be non-mobile, unaffected by context.

#8

"The Social Correlates of Nationalism: A Study of Native Indian Leaders in a Canadian Internal Colony"

by M. Boldt

in Comparative Political Studies,

14 (2), 205-231, 1981.

> ...we have little systematic information about the leaders of...internal colonies, their social background characteristics, or political goals. In this article, I present data on selected social background factors and political goals of one such leadership group: native Indian leaders in Canada. (p205)

This study, then, identifies 'Native Indian' leaders in the context of an internal colony. The subjects were a total of 63 individuals. It is within the context of the internal colony that 'Indians' turn out to be a self-conscious minority group. Boldt states,

> ...the 'we' feeling of Native Indians does not derive from their cultual traditions but rather grows out of a shared historical experience of political, economic, legal administrative and social oppression, deprivation and exclusion at the hands of the dominant society, and from common aspirations for the future. (p209)

Boldt has clearly identified two communities whose interaction has defined the boundary between them. The interactions and the context discussed give a clear meaning to the ethnic descriptor used to describe the individuals under investigation. From there he goes on to investigate the political attitudes of the leaders regarding the form 'Indian' participation within the Canadian nation-state

should take in the future.

The individuals and their interactions with the dominant society represent a microcosm of the colonial relationship. And it is these interactions which help form political attitudes. These attitudes are discussed as also being influenced by the people they represent and their own characteristics such as age, sex etc.

Thus, the identity ascribed these individuals is based on a particular context. They are both 'Indian' and 'leaders': 'Indian' within a colonial context and 'leaders' within the context of the 'Indian' community whose own identity has meaning within the same colonial context. The impression left by the author of this investigation is that the meaning of the identity is negotiable depending on the context. If there were no colonial relationship, the implication is that there would probably be no 'Indian' identity. The ethnic descriptor, thus, is given a mobile character.

Another impression developed by the author is that the characteristics investigated are also those which only 'Indians' could have given the context. This suggests that the characteristics said to be those of 'Indian' leaders of certain ages, and sex are appropriately assigned. It is of note that these individuals are assumed to develop their own attitudes and traits. They are not imposed upon by the norms of some group or other, however, they are influenced by interactions with these groups.

#9

"Ecological and Cultural Factors in Spatial Perceptual Development"

by L.W. Berry

in Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science,

3 (4), 324-336, 1971.

> A model was proposed in which spatial perceptual development was considered as a function of ecology, and as a finction of mediating variables (cultural, socialization, nutritional, and genetic) which were themselves viewed as functionally adapted to ecology. (p324)

The investigation reported on eight subsistance level groups. Of the eight, two were 'Canadian Eskimo'. One, a group from Pond Inlet, was identified as having a 'traditional' way of life and the other, a group from Frobisher Bay, was identified as having a 'transitional' way of life. The transitional way of life meant that that group was undergoing 'Westernization'. The conclusion was this:

> ...across a gradient of food accumulation and hunting, peoples will attain the levels of visual discrimination and spatial ability appropriate to the ecological demands. (p332)

There is no discussion of the Canadian context within which the 'Eskimo' lives and is identified as 'Eskimo'. The category is seen to be one which is naturally occurring and one which has certain cultural norms imposed on the individuals, i.e., all 'Eskimos' are the same culturally.

Individuals are investigated. Their spatial abilities are assumed to be influenced by the group with which they

have been identified. Their identity is seen to be fixed and unaffected by context. There is no question in the author's mind that the characteristics he discovers in each group of people are those of 'Eskimos'. However, since no context for the identification of the individuals as 'Eskimo' has been developed, and since there was no discussion of what characteristics might be affected by the interactions of the subjects in that context, there is a question in my mind that these characteristics are in fact those of 'Eskimos'.

The "impact of acculturation" is discussed in this study. It is the author's assumption that there are two separate communities coming into contact here. The dominant one is seen to impose its traits on the group outside itself. It is acculturation which is said to affect the characteristics under observation. There are two assumptions apparent here. The first is that all 'Eskimo' societies are the same culturally except for the amount of 'westernization' they have undergone. The second is that these societies are essentially static and as a result changes in them are discontinuous. Historical change takes place in steps.

In conclusion, the author has assumed that meaning of the descriptor 'Eskimo' to be self-evident. It signifies for him a real category, the members of which are doomed to a particular characteristic fate. Also, the characteristics of these groups of individuals are assumed changeable only under great pressure from without.

#10

"Self Concept and Attitudes: a Comparison of Indian and Non-Indian Students"

by R.A. Clifton

in The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology, 12 (4,Part2), 577-584, 1975.

> Previous research on Canadian Indian students suggests that they develop negative self-concepts and attitudes as a result of their position in society and school. However, most of this research has failed to compare the attitudes of non-Indian students who, presumably, have not faced the same social pressure and situation. (577)

Clifton found the 'Native' self-concepts not to be negative when compared to the 'non-Indian' attitudes and self-concepts. This is within the social context which is hinted at in the quote above. It is this suggestion of context which informs an understanding of the differences between the two communities. It is the author's assumption that the individuals studied are automatically understood to be 'Indian'. However, the fact that a discussion of context for the individual does not take place does not allow the author to test for characteristics which would be affected by the interactions relevant to the context. An investigation of such characteristics would have given credence to the descriptor used. The ascription of an 'Indian' identity does not appear to hold.

Assumptions of acculturation are not present in this study. The only assumption apparent is that these

individuals suffer social inequality. But such inequality is shown not to affect the individual traits investigated.

#11

"Status and Identification Grouping Amongst Urban Indians"

by M. Nagler

in Northian,

7 (2), 23-25,1970.

> The Indians' bond of commonality lies in the fact that they are the original inhabitants of North America...However, they are labelled 'Indian' and their subsequent treatment is influenced by this identification. This outside group identification is an important factor in their subsequent development as a group. (p29)

However, Nagler goes on to suggest that 'Indians' are not a cohesive group yet. With this said he categorized six groups of urban 'Indians'. He discusses economic associations within Canada and social interaction patterns which influence these different types of economic associations.

Among the groups are 'white collar' workers, 'blue collar' workers, and 'transitionals'. The types of identity each member of these groupings displays is mentioned. For example, 'white collar' workers are seen to take one of three 'Indian' identities. They may choose between: a. admitting their identity; b. being ambivalent about their identity or c. refusing to acknowledge 'Indian' ancestry.

The subjects of investigation are individuals. It is assumed that the relations which pertain to the macro level of communities hold for the individuals when it comes to economic status and presented identity.

What he is investigating is a microcosm of the larger social scene as he has identified it. But he has assumed that the individual is 'Indian' in all contexts both to himself and to the observer. It is just tricks (to avoid showing himself to be 'Indian') that the individual plays when denying 'Indianness'.

Thus, although the identity of the subjects is seen to be negotiable, the investigator refuses to acknowledge that the identity 'Indian' may not be an appropriate one. He has assumed that the labelling relationship takes place because of the interactions between two reified groups; the boundaries of which are not negotiable. This ignores the contextual influences on identity.

The resulting impression is that there are two separate communities which do not mutually influence each other. The flow of influence is from the 'Non-Indian' into the 'Indian' causing particular reactions. The dominance of the 'non-Indian' over the 'Indian' is implicit.

There is an attempt here to develop criteria for the ascribing of 'Indian' identity. Denton discusses the 'labelling relationship'. However, this fails because there is no discussion of mutual interaction and the contextual circumstances which might bring the 'Indian' identity to the fore.

#12

"Co-operation and Conflict Among Blackfoot Indian and Urban Canadian Children"

By A.G. Miller and R. Thomas

in Child Development, 43, 1104-1110, 1972.

> Blackfoot Indian and urban Canadian children played a game requiring co-operation under two reward conditions... (p1104).

The amount of culturally defined co-operation was investigated. This was so because

> Patterns of co-operation have been used to differentiate among cultures. (p1104)

The traditional plains culture of the Blackfoot has changed but there are some earlier values which linger. They say of the present day culture that "material achievement is viewed as highly desirable, but strong social pressures exist for sharing wealth among family members" (1105). They suggest that contrastingly "urban Canadian children are raised within the general North American cultural milieu with its support for individual competition and achievement" (1105).

Clearly the authors see two non-intersecting communities. That is, these two may be compared for various values orientations but the interaction between the two is not considered important for discussion. There is no mention made of the boundary between two interactants - a discussion which would give identity and meaning to each category. In

other words, the social context whithin which the 'Indian' and 'non-Indian' may be identified is ignored.

The subjects for this investigation were 48 Blood Indian children from the Indian Day school at Standoff, Alberta. The other half of the subjects were 48 children from the General Stewart School in Lethbridge, Alberta.

The conclusion drawn after testing of these subjects is that Blackfoot 'Indian' children

> seem better able to inhibit competitive responses than the non-Indian children...It is tempting to relate these differences to differences in cultural background of the two groups... (but the specific ways in which cultural factors) find expression is co-operation behaviors...is not known. (p1109-1110)

The authors discuss individuals as representative of the ethnic group 'Blackfoot Indians'. However, there was no mention made of what indicia (other than place of schooling) were used in the selection of individuals or the criteria used to identify these individuals as 'Indian'. Thus, what group they do actually represent is problematic. What Miller and Thomas have assumed is that 'Indians' because they might easily be identified as 'Indian', are individuals who in all situations follow the norms of that group. It is real in that its identity is fixed: it is a naturally occurring category, one which is not affected by context.

There is no overt discussion of the 'Indian's' place within society. The authors avoid depreciating the category in negative terms. Such a thing does happen in other studies when the acculturative model is appealed to. Although they

themselves do not suggest this sort of stereotyping, they leave room for such negative images by not presenting their own impressions of what it means to be 'Indian' in Alberta. The reader, then, must supply his own meanings and these are likely to be commonsense, stereotyped notions. The individuals studied in this report are felt to suffer the consequences of such images.

There is also the image of the 'Indian' as outside, non-interacting with, separate and different from the dominant 'White' society.

#13

"Modification of Behavior Patterns of Indian Children"

by C.G. Galloway and N.I. Mickelson

in The Elementary School Journal,

72 (3), 150-155, December, 1971.

> Behaviors exhibited by disadvantaged children in school settings might well be conceived of as inappropriate patterns learned through environmental experiences. (p150)

The 'disadvantaged' subjects of this investigation were three groups of unsuspecting 'Indian' children from a reserve on southern Vancouver Island. Their place of residence is the indicum of identification. The criteria for identifying them as 'Indian' is not discussed. There is no social context discussed which might inform the reader about what it means to be an 'Indian' living on Vancouver Island. This applies equally to the people of the reserve and to the individuals who are the objects of the investigation. The children are not only identified as 'Indian' but also as disadvantaged and behaviorally inferior to the normal run-of-the-mill child.

Since these children were so 'disadvantaged', the authors investigated the effects of raisins and verbal reinforcement as motivators for these children. These strategies appeared to improve the children's reading abilities. That may well have been the case, but the assumption throughout is that 'Indians' live deprived lives,

are intellectually disadvantaged and generally not up to the social levels of the rest of the society. This assumption added to the results of the study suggests that it is the 'Indian' who is out of step but that with a little moulding (something which is apparently easily done with these 'Indians') they can be brought into the 'proper' cultural world of the dominant society. They are seen to be misfits.

Not only are the assumptions about what it means to be 'Indian' within Canada apparently unjustified but the identity given these children is also not discussed. By not discussing how the subjects were given identity for the study, the authors have assumed that their ethnic identity is not changeable. They have assumed that everything these children do is as a result of their ethnicity. Their 'Indianness' is seen to force particular patterns of behavior and thus could be said to be, in the eyes of the authors, an unquestionable social fact.

#14

"The Incarcerated Native"

by E.B. Lane, H.W. Daniels, J.D. Blyan, R. Royer

in Canadian Journal of Criminology,

20 (3), 308-316, 1978.

The abstract for this article states,

> The Metis and Non-Status Indian Crime and Justice Commission's final report contains background information obtained from a sample of 316 Native penitentiary inmates, acquired between January and July 1977. This paper describes some of the background and methodology of the research, and major findings covering age, security level, type of offence, sentence length and Indian status. Also details of previous juvenile and adult criminal history community and socio-economic data, drug and alcohol use and the brotherhood and sisterhood organizations within the institutions visited. No theoretical interpretation is attempted, but recommendations for change are mentioned in the context of Native self-determination, and the necessity for increased participation and control by Native people over decisions affecting them.

It is obvious that this article used as subjects 316 individuals held in penitentiaries in Canada. What is not obvious is why these individuals are identified as 'Indian'.

The paper discusses a context within Canada which identifies a meaning for the term 'Indian'. There is a discussion of the peculiar 'Native' experience on reserves, in residential schools and within the economic and social structure of Canada. In this sense two opposed and interacting communities are identified. It is this interaction which is discussed as affecting certain outcomes for the 'Native' population. However, an analysis of this

context for the individual is lacking. There is no discussion of what characteristics within the individual are affected by such interactions. The assumption is that since these individuals are described as 'Native' on the institution's records, then they are in every respect 'Native'. That is, the identity affects all the characteristics which the individuals possess. No specific characteristics based on an hypothesis about the interactions of these individuals with some other group are selected for investigation.

In this study the context at the macro level is well set. An understanding of the term 'Native' is given. But this is not followed through at the individual level - the level of the actual investigation. The result is that the findings themselves cannot be seen to apply to 'Natives'. In fact the authors arrive at the same conclusion.

> It is difficult to evaluate the differences or similarities between the sample described here and a Non-Native sample of equivalent size. (p316)

#15

"Conflict, Confrontation and Social Change on the St. Regis Indian Reserve"

by J.A. Frisch

in Northian,

8 (3),11-15, 1971.

The community discussed is described as a 3500 member Mohawk Indian Reserve in Ontario, Quebec and N.Y. State. What is investigated is the interactions of this group with two other communities at different times. The first instance is with a local school board, and the second is with federal government. It is the influences of these interactions on reserve life which are discussed. The context for the identification of an "Indian Reserve' is well set although it is not given a specific name.

What is under investigation is the internal organization and behaviors of the community given certain interactions with other communities.

> The Mohawk have become quite adept at developing a social action strategy of conflict and confrontation to bring about important social change. (p11)

The first interaction scene takes place when a local school board with which the reserve deals would not accede to the demands made upon it by the reserve. The effect was that the community became united about the issue. It was because of this united action that in the end the reserve was given voting power during school board elections.

In the second instance, some of the reserve members blockaded the international bridge running through the reserve. One of the demands was for free passage across the U.S-Canada border. In this case the community did not unite behind the issue and the result was that relations between the interactants did not change.

Yet the author has not successfully set criteria for ascribing the identity 'Indian'. The interactions within which the community boundaries are defined are clear. But there is no discussion of what sorts of interactions might allow the descriptor 'Indian' to be used.

The study is peculiar among the 20 presented here in that it has presented interaction in terms of mutual influence, but it has at the same time assumed that the identity 'Indian' is appropriate in all contexts. The consequences appear to be two: First is the assumption that the ethnic group 'Indian' is a real group. The descriptor is seen to apply at all times. The second, and perhaps the more important, is that the identity 'Indian' is watered down to such an extent that it means virtually nothing. The 'Indian' then is deprived of any special place within the society.

#16

"Rapid Socio-cultural Change and Student Mental Health. Part 2: A Comparison of Findings"

by R.M. Wintrob

in McGill Journal of Education,

5 (1), 56-64, 1970.

Wintrob (1969:174), Part 1 in this series of articles, explains that the data collected for this investigation were from students in particular environments. What was studied was this:

> ...the effects of rapid socio-economic change on the role identity of two groups of adolescent students living in very different environments, but sharing certain characteristics.

The two groups which shared these 'certain characteristics' were Liberians of tribal origin and Cree Indians from north-central Quebec. For the latter, he states that "it is recent large-scale forestry and mining operations in the region, the introduction of roads and communications and the decline in fur prices" (Ibid:178) which are helping create changes for the Cree. This is the context within which he develops an understanding of what it is to be 'Cree Indian' in Quebec.

From this context and the data collected in Part 1, he goes on in this article to discuss the influences of the dominant society on the values of the Cree in acculturative terms. He states, "The process of cultural change is

initiated by limited but increasing contact of one culture with another" (1970:57). Within this framework, Wintrob discusses the stages of acceptance or rejection of the southern educational system by the adults in the community. He also discusses changes in the students' handling of role conflict (between their traditional upbringing and the modern one they get in school), defense mechanisms, and resolution of identity conflict in these terms. He compares the results for Cree with Liberians. The major assumption here is that both societies are equally traditional and equally suffering because of the imposed influences of the twentieth century. It is interesting to note that the stages through which the community goes are intergenerationally disjointed and at odds with oneanother.

A context was set for an understanding of the economic circumstances in which the people of the Waswanipi and Mistassini Bands find themselves. A boundary was conceptualized between them and an economically more powerful community. But instead of being presented as one in which the interactants are part of the same society, we see two separate communities one of which has been left behind the other and is being forced into the modern world. It seems that it is the backward nature of the 'Indian' society which has caused the economic disparity. It is this context which influences the individuals investigated. They are seen as being dragged out of a backward environment and it is this which causes conflict for them. It is this conflict

which is investigated. Thus, the author has hypothesized changes in individual characteristics which would be affected given the context developed. In this case, though context is consistently applied to the individual, it is a context which stigmatizes him as being delivered from a backward environment.

The image of the 'Indian' presented by the author is of an appendage to the dominant society. An appendage which will eventually become like the dominant society. The ethnic marker has a special use here. It is a label attached to the individuals from a particular area. Being from that area they are outside main stream society. It is difficult to discern whether the author means to imply another descriptor would be useful given the introduction of another context. Be that as it may or not, another major assumption made by the author is that these individuals are imposed upon from two directions. Their parents as 'Indians' impose one set of norms upon them while the dominant society imposes another. This causes conflict since it is assumed that social change is step-like. The members of the society being forced to change from one static position to another. It so happens that the dominant society is seen to have greater power over the individual than his own in this case. But the identity 'Indian' in this article is seen to be an identity which overrides all the individual's characteristics.

The context in this paper is poorly developed. As a result, the suggestion that the characteristics of the

individuals investigated are those of 'Indians' only is open to question.

#17

"Education and Values in an Indian Community"

by J.W. Friesen

in The Alberta Journal of Educational Research,

20 (2), 146-156, 1974.

> This paper deals with cultural values as these are identifiable in an Indian community in Southern Alberta. (p146)

Friesen compares the values of four groups:

1. Blackfoot and non-Indian students
2. Blackfoot students and their parents
3. Blackfoot students and their teachers
4. Blackfoot students attending an integrated school and those attending an all Indian school.

The author discusses two parallel communities for which he suggests values might be different. In fact he does find that they are different. At the same time, he identifies two parallel and equally separate communities within the Blackfoot population - parents and students.

The findings were that 'Indian' children exhibit "reduced confidence in human nature, in the future and in self-esteem. Their value orientations tended to reveal traditional stances on family, authority and living for the present" (p153). This is a meaning given to the term 'Indian'. It seems a rather negative one indicating backwardness.

The only problem evident here is that no context is developed for an understanding of the terms 'Indian' or 'White'. It is this which effectively destroys the suggestion that the results apply to 'Indians'. There is no discussion of an interaction between the two communities - an interaction which would give meaningful reason to apply the identity. It is assumed that once individuals have been identified as 'Indian', using whatever indicators the investigator might use (in this case, this is not discussed), they are necessarily 'Indian' in all contexts and all the characteristics of those individuals are necessarily those of 'Indians'. This is an assumption which I find problematic.

Something else of note here is the image portrayed of the 'Indian'. This is what would be called a scientific investigation. It finds that 'Indians' are different from 'Whites' in the traits mentioned above. They are seen to be primitive - backward. But this conclusion is not justified.

In the case of this study, an educator draws certain conclusions about 'Indians' which do not necessarily apply and these conclusions are most likely studied by would-be teachers. The effects on the interactions between these people and 'Indians' when they believe they are interacting with the typical 'Indian' student can be drastic. Thus, the social consequences of this sort of research which purports to identify the characteristics of 'Indians' becomes evident.

#18

"The Education of Canadian Indians: an In-Depth Study of Nine Families"

by A. Berger

in The Alberta Journal of Educational Research,

19 (4), 334-342, Dec., 1973.

> Education, heritage and culture are highly prized by families involved in this indepth study of Canadian Indians. (p334)

This is the conclusion as described in the abstract.

The study itself was conducted in two parts and was aimed at discovering some of the reasons for the "high dropout rate of Indian students between grades one and twelve" (p334). The first part dealt with students at school on the Hobbema reserve. The second, the subject of this paper, dealt with nine 'Indian' families, their "views and feelings...in regard to education, culture, and related matters" (p335).

Some of the variables kept in mind while the investigation progressed were whether the families were "treaty or non-treaty; Indian or Metis; age of children ..." and so on. These were the indicators of who was 'Indian'. However, once the individuals to be studied were found, no context is discussed for arriving at the ethnic descriptor applied. That is, the identity 'Indian' is assumed to be overriding factor in an individual's life and as such it affects all aspects of that life. The category is assumed to

be naturally occurring and a discussion of how the term is being applied is seen to be unnecessary.

The only conclusion to be arrived at is that the characteristics of these families are not necessarily those of 'Indians'. They could be characteristics of almost any family. It is the case that the groups studied are forced into an identity the meaning of which is left up to the reader of the article. However, the author gives a peculiar twist to the stigma placed on these families. He states,

> ...what was striking about Indians is their openness to share, to accept white people, if only they - the whites - would make the first move. (p339-340)

What this means is beyond me, but it sounds as though he argues so much for a view of the 'Indian' as normal, almost like the rest of us, that he makes the reader wonder what it is he is trying to protect.

#19

"The Presentation of the Self in Household Settings"

by T. Denton

in Anthropologica,

12 (2), 221-240, 1970.

> This report aims at demonstrating the dramaturgical approach may profitably be applied to the study of social relations within a house. (p221)

Interestingly, what sort of household is never openly discussed, although the houses studied were on "an acculturated Canadian Indian reserve". There is no further discussion of what it means to be 'Indian'.

However, this is enough to give the impression that the author views 'Indians' as having been brought successfully out of their traditional culture and into the main stream of Canadian culture. It can only be assumed that the trappings of ancient 'Indian' culture have been laid down somewhere in the past. Yet it is left up to the reader to develop his own meaning for the ethnic descriptor.

To whom do the results of the study apply? There is no answer other than the suggestion by the author that "We may anticipate that householders, wherever they are found, will make use of clear-cut strategies for the presentation of self in their homes" (p237).

The only conclusion I can come to regarding the author's view of 'Indians' is that he sees them as an undifferentiated community within the Canadian social scene.

The final impression is of an investigation devoid of any substantive meaning.

#20

"Self-Evaluation of Native and Euro-Canadian Students"

by R.M. Bienvenue

in Canadian Ethnic Studies,

10 (1), 97-105, 1978.

> When self-concept traits are differentiated, the self-evaluations of Native students are more positive and more balanced than previously assumed. In comparison to Euro-Canadians, they generally express less favorable self-evaluation in terms of characteristics considered important for achievement and success. But in terms of traits emerging through primary group activities and subcultural norms, the self-evaluations of native students do not differ substantially from those of Euro-Canadians. (p97)

The sample included 195 students in a large high school in northern Canada, 59 of whom were of 'Native' ancestry. The others (136) were of Euro-Canadian origin. The results are mentioned above.

Bienvenue, although not discussing in any detail a context in which the meaning of the term 'Native' has developed, suggests that students identified as 'Native' may have a dual identity. They have norms which relate to their 'Native' backgrounds and they develop certain ways of acting in school. The influences of these identities on the individuals' characteristics are difficult to discern and need further study, she suggests. By discussing the possibility of contextual influences on characteristics she hints at interacting communities which might mutually influence each other but that is as far as it goes. It is

only a hint.

What is presented in this study, in the end, is a comparison of the characteristics of two groups of students. No context is developed as justification for the application of the ethnic markers used. She has used certain indicators of ethnicity, indicators which are not mentioned, and proceeded to draw conclusions about 'Natives'. The assumption she had to make to arrive at the use of the ethnic markers was that the group to which an individual belongs has only one identity and it is that identity which defines how the individual members will act. In this way, the author has frozen the identity of the individuals investigated.

The image of what it means to be 'Native' is apparently left up to the reader. Although the characteristics ascribed the 'Native' in the conclusion may be applied by the reader (however incorrect that may be), the author leaves the reader to keep his personal impressions and stereotypes.